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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should foreign workers be made to pay for their own medical insurance?

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INSIDE



Dog Show

The "Who's the Alpha Dog Bully Show" comes to Saipan on Feb. 19, 2011.

LOCAL...Page 7



Corporate Buys

Corporations are adding iPads to their approved device list at an amazing rate.

BUSINESS...Page 13



Banner Year

2011 is already shaping up to be an unforgettable year for Natalie Portman.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

Fitial, Taiwan president meet to strengthen ties. PAGE 2
Bill seeks to require alien workers to pay for health insurance. PAGE 3

2010 STATE OF THE JUDICIARY REPORT

Courts' funding dropped by 44 pct. over 12 years

» **Demapan urges citizens to demand enough budget for courts**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Citing a 44-percent decline in funding for the CNMI Judiciary over the last 12 years, Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan urged all Commonwealth citizens yesterday to demand that the court system be given enough budget so it could carry out its constitutional mandate to provide justice to everyone.

See **COURTS** on **Page 4**



Demapan

FROM FISCAL YEAR 2008 TO DATE: Tinian spent \$311K for professional services

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Municipality of Tinian spent a total of \$310,906 for legal and professional representations in the last three fiscal years—from 2008 through 2010—based on records obtained through an Open Government Act request of a private citizen.

These records from the Tinian municipal treasury showed that the municipality incurred its largest professional contract expenses in fiscal year 2008, with \$143,447 paid out for 67 transactions with seven indi-

» **Dela Cruz vows to eliminate consultants; terminates other contracts**

See **TINIAN** on **Page 4**

CUC extended counsel's sole-source contract for \$150 an hour

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. extended last year its sole-source professional legal service contract with Fisher Huesman LLC for the same rate of \$150 an hour, until Sept. 15, 2011.

While the rate remains the same, CUC increased its budget for this contract "due to substantial added work from the in-house counsel's office."

From 150 hours per quarter, the estimated hours were changed to 350 per quarter.

"This suggests that this contract may average perhaps 1,400 hours for one-year term of this contract renewal," the contract states.

A copy of the amended contract was among the documents CUC provided former representative Tina Sablan who, along with two others, filed close to 20

See **CUC** on **Page 4**



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Rev. Fr. Ryan P. Jimenez, center, is flanked by Mount Carmel School students during the proclamation signing yesterday at Mount Carmel Cathedral. The diocese of Chalan Kanoa and MCS officials have endorsed Jan. 30 through Feb. 4 as Catholic Schools Week in the Commonwealth.

MONETH G. DEPOSA

See story on **Page 6**

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Local

Fitial, Taiwan president meet to help strengthen tourism, trade ties

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitia met with Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou Tuesday last week to explore the possibility of expanding bilateral economic, trade and investment cooperation between the CNMI and Taiwan, press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday.

The governor is particularly interested in pursuing an educa-

tional-tourism program wherein Taiwanese students will study the English language in the CNMI, among other things.

"Certainly, the governor would definitely like to see the planned edu-tourism program come to fruition," the press secretary told *Saipan Tribune*.

Fitia is only the ninth U.S. gubernatorial-level official to have met Ma since he assumed Taiwan's presidency in 2008, Demapan added.

Demapan said President Ma welcomed Fitia, first lady Josie Fitia, and former Guam governor Joseph F. Ada on Jan. 18.

In that meeting, the Taiwan president was joined by his National Security Council Deputy Secretary-General Chih-kung Liu.

"Governor Fitia was elated to see that the President Ma is in support of strengthening its ties with the CNMI in terms of education, culture and tourism,"

the press secretary said.

Prior to his meeting with the president, Fitia met with Taiwan Minister of Foreign Affairs Timothy Chin-Tien Yang.

Demapan said the governor is optimistic about the economic opportunities that may arise through the development of an educational tourism industry in the Northern Marianas.

"President Ma had indicated his support to encourage Taiwan students to take language courses in the CNMI through our local community college as well as private institutions of higher learning," Fitia said in a statement.

With the support of the Tai-

wanese president, Fitia is seeking to broaden the potential for educational tourism to include exchange programs between Taiwan and CNMI schools.

"We also discussed the possibility of expanding the idea to include student exchange programs at the junior high and high school level. This would provide students from both jurisdictions the opportunity to expand their knowledge and learn about the importance of international diversity," Fitia added.

Demapan said the Taiwan president also expressed his appreciation for the implementation of the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program, which allows

Republic of China nationals to enter the CNMI and Guam visa-free.

He said the president noted that this makes it a lot more convenient for Taiwanese tourists to visit the Northern Marianas.

Fitia returned to Saipan on Sunday after a two-week trip to Hong Kong and Taiwan from Jan. 9 to 23. His office said the governor paid for his own trip to these two Asian destinations.

The governor and his wife went to Hong Kong first, mainly to attend the 45th anniversary celebration of Luen Thai, the parent company of Tan Holdings Corp. From there, he went to Taipei.

WITH WORST FINANCIAL CRISIS

'Cut number of lawmakers or part-time Legislature'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

With a shrinking population base since the 2000 census, coupled with one of the worst financial crises, some lawmakers are now weighing the possibility of either reducing the number of lawmakers—now at 29—or push for a part-time Legislature like what other bigger U.S. states do.

Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan) said yesterday that he will introduce an initiative as early as February to reduce the number of Saipan representatives by half—from the current 18 to only nine.

Of the 20 House members, 18 are from Saipan and one each are from Tinian and Rota.

Three senators from Saipan, Tinian and Rota comprise the nine-member Senate.

"I have been planning about this initiative for a while now. I have been talking to former lawmakers and people in the community about this because we're in a bad economic time and there are just too many lawmakers disagreeing on a lot of issues and we wasted a lot of time and resources. For me, I'd like to reduce the number of Saipan House members from 18 to nine," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Once his planned initiative passes the House and Senate, it will be presented to voters in either a special or general election.

"Let Saipan voters decide whether or not they want the number of lawmakers from Saipan to be reduced, and not on a precinct basis but taking into consideration the whole Saipan's population," he said.

House minority leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan), for his part, said the results of the Census 2010 that are scheduled for release this summer will give everyone an idea about the population estimates as of 2010 compared to 2000.

In a 10-year span, the CNMI's once mighty garment industry with 34 factories at its peak is gone and tourist arrivals have shrunk significantly, shrinking the population base.

"I am for an immediate reduction in the number of lawmakers once the Census numbers are out," Benavente said.

He said an initiative could also be introduced to push for a part-time Legislature, wherein lawmakers will only be paid during times when they attend sessions or do actual legislative work.

"This is done in other much bigger states like Oregon, where I met the speaker once. If they can do it, I don't see why we can't do it. ... I really do believe it's feasible here," he added.

Benavente, one of the longest serving CNMI lawmakers, said in the first few years since the islands became a commonwealth, there was a need to have a full-time Legislature.

"But we're now over 30 years old and it's about time we consider having a part-time Legislature," he added.

Rep. Fred DeLeon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan) said if it were up to him, he would reduce the number of legislators "to a point where they are still representing their precincts well."

Rep. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) said the idea of a part-time Legislature may not be a popular one "but it's worth considering as it may have significant fiscal impact on government spending."

She said she supports either

a part-time Legislature or a reduced number of legislators, "or perhaps both."

Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan), who donates his salary as a senator to scholarships, said he doesn't have a problem having a part-time Legislature.

"If someone introduces it, I will support it," he added.

On Aug. 7, 2007, the CNMI Supreme Court issued a ruling that increased the number of House members from 18 to 20.

The court's ruling was in response to a May 14, 2007 petition to the court by former senator Maria Frica T. Pangelinan and former representative Tina Sablan to exercise its constitutional mandate to reapportion and redistrict the House, as both the Legislature and the governor failed to act within the constitutional time frame.

The petitioners proposed to exclude the nonresident population from the computation and thereby reduce the House membership from 18 to 14.

But the high court decided on the increase from 18 to 20 after determining that all residents, including nonresident workers, should be included for purposes of apportioning the House.

At the time, the Census 2000 population estimates were used. Lawmakers interviewed yesterday said there's definitely a significant drop in population estimates between 2000 and 2010 that will support any move to reduce the number of lawmakers on Saipan.

Air Force starts FDM training today

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Air Force will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on the following dates and times:

- Jan. 25 from 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Jan. 26 from 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Jan. 27-28 from 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

The general public, especially

fisherman, commercial pilots and marine tour operators, are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. (USN)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitia and first lady Josie Fitia flank Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou Tuesday last week. Fitia met Ma to explore the possibility of expanding bilateral economic, trade and investment cooperation between the CNMI and Taiwan.

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Bill seeks to require alien workers to pay for health insurance

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

If and when a newly pre-filed bill becomes law, it will no longer be mandatory for CNMI

employers to pay 100 percent of their foreign workers' medical insurance.

House Bill 17-147 would make it "optional" and "voluntary" for employers to carry

medical insurance for each alien worker they employ.

House minority leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan), author of the bill, said with the CNMI minimum wage increased to

\$5.05 an hour, foreign workers can now pay for their medical coverage and benefits such as medical insurance coverage should no longer be mandated.

The CNMI's hourly minimum wage of \$5.05 is a 66-percent increase from \$3.05 an hour three years ago.

"Additionally, the removal of such mandated benefits will create fairness for all employees within the Commonwealth, nonresident and resident workers alike," Benavente said in his bill.

Rabby Syed, president of the United Workers Movement-NMI, which has thousands of foreign workers and their supporters as members, said the future relationship between CNMI employers and their foreign employees—including whether medical insurance will still be mandatory for employers—will be laid out in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's transitional worker rule set for release in March 2011.

"Our understanding is that when the worker rules come out, we would know if the CNMI Department of Labor still has a role or authority over alien workers," he said.

Syed also said that the timing of the bill may not be right. "For the United Workers Movement, the CNMI needs to create a good job market for both the indigenous workers and foreign workers," he added.

Currently, benefits including medical insurance coverage are provided to nonresident workers to ensure that medical bills are paid. The bill says because of the low minimum wage, the mandatory medical insurance coverage paid by employers was needed as additional support to nonresident workers. "The Commonwealth Legisla-

ture finds, however, that such assistance is no longer necessary," Benavente said in his bill, referring to the annual 50-cent increase in minimum wage since 2007.

U.S. Public Law 110-228, signed on May 25, 2007, increased the CNMI's minimum wage from \$3.05 an hour to \$3.55 an hour, with additional 50-cent increases every year until it reaches the federal wage floor of \$7.25 an hour. However, the scheduled 50-cent increase in 2011 was deferred.

In an interview, Benavente said employers may still choose to fully pay their alien workers' health insurance, or ask them to pay a portion of it. For example, employers may pay 50 percent or 30 percent, and let the foreign worker pay the remaining balance.

Benavente will formally introduce the bill in the next House session, tentatively set this Thursday.



LIBRARY TIME

Learning does not stop at school. Students from Tinian High School—Jimuel Cabay, Joel Ignacio, Jayron Epity, and Ken Casauran—are shown here recently putting in more learning hours at the Tinian Municipal Library.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CUC hires public info officer for \$22 an hour; on-need basis only

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has hired a new public information consultant, a position that, although not required by federal stipulated orders, was described by CUC as important at this time.

CUC executive director Abe Utu Malae confirmed with the *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that

Rose Ada-Hocog's company, Schobwuut Premier Consulting, was contracted as CUC's information consultant and is now tasked to take care of public announcements and media inquiries.

Ada-Hocog disclosed that her company was contracted at \$22 per hour of service, with "no length of time," but "on as-needed basis only."

"The reason why we need a sharp person like Rose Ada-

Hocog on board is because of the many questions like yours that need to be answered. Plus there is a ton of public announcements that have to be disseminated," said Malae yesterday.

Malae said CUC's customer service and public information function needs major improvements.

"She is taking care of one part of customer service. She also has the advantage of being flu-

ent in the three languages of the CNMI. She is not an employee; we are using her services as needed," added Malae.

CUC used to have a full-time public information officer, Pamela Mathis.

Malae said the executive director position that he currently holds cannot handle as additional work the several inquiries being received by the agency. Having a public information consultant, he said, will help CUC address some areas of its customer service.

NMPASI sues Villagomez, medical records technician

The Northern Marianas Protection And Advocacy Systems Inc. has filed a lawsuit against Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin P. Villagomez and the Commonwealth Health Center's medical records technician, Melissa Sablan, for their alleged refusal to provide NMPASI access to all records of a certain patient who has a mental illness.

NMPASI, through counsel Jeanne H. Rayphand, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to order Villagomez and Sablan to provide the agency full access to all records of the unnamed patient from June 1, 2010, to the present.

NMPASI also demanded payment of attorney's fees and court costs.

According to the complaint, NMPASI had determined—as a result of monitoring and other activities—that there is probable cause to believe that the patient has been subject to abuse and neglect.

Rayphand said the patient was involuntarily committed to the Psychiatric Unit of CHC in violation of his rights under the Commonwealth law and in violation of his due process and equal protection rights protected by the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The lawyer said the defendants refused NMPASI's request for access to the records of the patient.

"The conduct of defendants

has prevented NMPASI from conducting independent, timely, and effective investigations of allegations of abuse and neglect of persons with mental illness," Rayphand said.

She added that the refusal of

defendants to provide NMPASI access to the records violates the Dec. 14, 2001 order of the district court that barred the defendants from denying NMPASI access to records of all persons with disabilities. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

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3 women with cases of theft, forgery plead guilty

Three women accused of stealing credit cards and other items and forging several checks pleaded guilty yesterday and were sentenced in the Superior Court.

Barbie Ann Borja, Joanne Babauta Cabrera, and Zenita B. Cabrera signed a plea agreement with the government and pleaded guilty.

All defendants will no longer serve prison time as the court gave them suspended sentences and credit for the time they had already served in jail.

Borja pleaded guilty to theft by deception and forgery. She pleaded guilty to theft by deception and forgery in another case. She pleaded guilty to theft in a third case.

Joanne Cabrera pleaded guilty to theft by deception and forgery. She pleaded guilty to theft in the second case, and pleaded guilty to theft and conspiracy to commit theft in the third case.

Zenita Cabrera pleaded guilty to a count of theft. The second case that charged her with theft and conspiracy were dismissed.

Assistant Attorney General Benjamin Petersburg represented the government in the cases.

Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja sentenced Borja to five years in prison, all suspended except for 152 days. Naraja gave Borja credit for the 152

days she had already served in jail.

The judge placed Borja on probation for five years and required her to pay a \$100 fine, and \$5,181.58 in restitution to Twins Market, CYC Store, Sunleader Store, and other establishments.

Borja was ordered to perform 500 hours of community service.

With respect to Joanne Cabrera, the judge sentenced her to five years in prison, all suspended except for 33 days. She was given credit for the 33 days she had already served in jail.

Naraja placed Joanne Cabrera on supervised probation for five years and required her to pay a \$100 fine, and \$1,574.93 in restitution to several victims.

The judge ordered her to perform 500 hours of community service and pay court costs and probation fees.

Naraja sentenced Zenita Cabrera to a year in jail, all suspended except for 19 days. She was given credit for the 19 days she had already served in jail.

The judge placed Zenita Cabrera on probation for five years and ordered her to pay a \$100 fine and \$3,351.32 in restitution to Maricar Muñoz and other victims.

Naraja ordered the defendant to perform 500 hours of community service and pay court costs, and probation fees. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

client of Fisher Huesman and waives conflicts that could arise as a result of that representation, with the understanding that the law firm will in the future notify and discuss each potential conflict as it arises.

Fisher Huesman handles litigation previously handled by CUC's in-house counsel Timothy Connor, who passed away in April 2010.

The law firm additionally assist with in-house matters until CUC can engage a full-time in-house counsel. There are, however, three exceptions.

First is on procurement in which CUC will make every effort to have contracts reviewed by other counsel, but if necessary, Fisher Huesman will review contracts on an as-needed basis and only if the contractor agrees.

Second, Fisher Huesman will not be charged with managing outside counsels.

Third, Fisher Huesman will not represent CUC on a particular issue or matter if there is a conflict with another of the contractor's clients.

CUC and Fisher Huesman also agreed that the analysis of the DCM Group matter was put on hold by CUC "in favor of other, more pressing matters. Contractor will analyze DCM upon instruction from CUC."

CUC terminated its \$5.1 million deal with the Guam-based DCM Group in July 2008 after the company reportedly failed to repair the generators by a set deadline, as required by the contract.

CUC claimed it has paid already DCM over \$400,000 under the failed contract.

The termination of the contract had prompted CUC to issue an emergency request for proposals for overhaul work on power engines 5 and 7 at Power Plant 1.

Sablan's OGA requests aim to bring to light any abuses of public funds or the CNMI procurement process that may have occurred, and take further action as necessary.

TINIAN

From Page 1

viduals.

In fiscal year 2009, expenditure for the same purpose totaled \$82,598 representing 26 transactions with five persons.

In fiscal year 2010, Tinian paid \$63,510 in total professional contracts, representing 24 transactions with seven persons.

For the first three months of the current fiscal year, the municipality has already incurred \$21,350 for 10 transactions with six individuals.

The records, obtained through an OGA request by Tinian resident Kimberly King-Hinds, show that the bulk of professional fees paid out in 2008 went to Rex Palacios, who was then a consultant to former mayor Jose P. San Nicolas. He was paid \$41,355 for his work from October 2007 through March 2008.

The next highest fees were paid to lawyer Joey San Nicolas, who got \$36,000 from October 2007 through September 2008.

Other payments in 2008 were for consultant Jeanette Borja, who was paid \$22,762; Gladyliza Untalan, \$12,351; O'Connor Berman Dotts & Banes, \$12,000; Colin Thompson, \$10,264; and Concepcion Manglona, \$8,715.

In fiscal year 2009, the \$82,598 professional fees went to the following:

- Lawyer Ray Quichocho, \$27,280, for services from December 2008 to September 2009;
- Lawyer Joey San Nicolas, \$27,000, for services from November 2008 to July 2009;
- Lawyer Lucy Blanco-Maratita,

\$12,000, for services from May 2009 through July 2009;

■ O'Connor, Berman, Dotts & Banes, \$9,754, for services from March 2009 to April 2009; and

■ Charlene Lizama, \$6,564, for services from August 2009 to September 2009.

In fiscal year 2010, the total legal contract expenses of \$63,510 is broken down as follows:

■ Ray Quichocho, \$27,237, for services from October 2009 to September 2010;

■ Lucy Blanco-Maratita, \$15,000, for services from October 2009 to December 2009;

■ Roy Reyes, \$10,000, for services from March 2010 to September 2010;

■ Matthew Gregory, \$6,761, for services from December 2009 to January 2010;

■ Charlene Lizama, \$2,016, for services from Oct. 7 to Oct. 14, 2009;

■ Steve Borja, \$1,500, one-time payment in September 2010; and

■ Joey San Nicolas, \$997.50, one-time payment on Sept. 27, 2010.

For the first three months of fiscal year 2011, *Saipan Tribune* learned that the \$21,350 in total expenses were paid to the following consultants and professionals: Don Farrel, \$2,400; Jose P. Cruz, \$1,000; Joey San Nicolas, \$950.50; Michael Dotts, \$2,000; Ray Quichocho, \$10,000; and Roy Reyes, \$5,000.

These expenses were paid from October 2010 through December 2010.

'Several contracts terminated due to budget constraints'

Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz defended the expenses incurred under his administration but at the same

time vowed to reduce, if not eliminate, the hiring of consultants and professionals.

Due to funding problems, he said that he had also terminated several contracts, including that of lawyer Ray Quichocho, who was representing the Tinian municipality in various cases and transactions. He said Quichocho's contract was terminated in May 2010.

Dela Cruz is eyeing seeking the legal services of the Office of the Attorney General to minimize his office's legal costs.

He defended yesterday the \$21,350 spent in the first three months of the fiscal year, saying that each professional did an outstanding job for Tinian at a minimal cost.

For example, he said, Don Farrell, who was paid \$2,400, was contracted to organize Tinian's 5-Year Economic Master Plan, which included the planned military buildup for the island.

Jose Cruz, who was paid \$1,000, was tasked to conduct a comprehensive workforce development survey for Tinian that includes survey among high school students, while Joey San Nicolas represented Tinian in a court case regarding employer's contributions; Michael Dotts was hired for a conversion case, which used to be handled by Ray Quichocho; and Roy Reyes, an engineer, was hired to evaluate some Tinian projects such as the Natibu Park.

"Because we're expecting a lower budget...it's not our intention to get or hire professionals and consultants if we don't have the means to do so. However, because of the nature of our work, there's a need to maintain some contracts to represent us in legal matters," he added.

COURTS

From Page 1

In the 13-page State of the Judiciary Report he issued yesterday, Demapan highlighted, among other subjects, the continued decrease in the Judiciary's budget and its effects on the Commonwealth. The chief justice issued the report instead of holding the traditional State of the Judiciary Address.

"Despite our uncertain financial situation, we must uphold the Commonwealth and U.S. constitutions," said Demapan in his report, titled "Your Judiciary at Work for a Better Commonwealth."

He listed a long list of the Judiciary's accomplishments, but admitted that he is troubled "by our current tribulations."

In 1999, he said, the Judiciary's budget was \$5.9 million; this year, it is down to \$3.3 million.

He noted that even though the Judiciary is a co-equal branch of government, it got less than 3 percent of the budget allotted for 2011.

This continued drop in funding has resulted in the Judiciary letting go of over 35 percent of its staff in the last several years, he said. "This translates into a personnel reduction from 120 full-time positions to 74-full time positions," he added.

Demapan said staff reductions and

a shrinking budget mean that processing child support payments, visitation orders, and complicated civil settlement agreements take more time. Civil cases take longer to adjudicate and delays tie up property and financial resources for years, he said.

Worse, the shortage of judicial resources affects criminal cases as this can cause postponement of criminal hearings, warrant updates, probation hearings, entering of no-contract orders, and may even delay transmission of vital information such as criminal case histories and abuse protection orders to the Department of Public Safety.

"We cannot allow these things to happen in our Commonwealth," Demapan said.

The chief justice said they understand that the government is facing tremendous financial difficulty, and that they know too that, like the Legislature and the Executive Branch, the Judiciary must conserve resources.

"Even so, the Judiciary has a sacred duty to protect the community," he stressed.

He pointed out that, for the first time in CNMI history, the government shut down in October last year because the 17th Legislature failed to pass a budget. The 10-day shutdown, he said, affected more than 1,400 government employees, including the Judiciary.

Despite these tribulations, Demapan said he is proud to say that the Judiciary preserved in its mission. Much of the Judiciary remained functional, including the family court, the Office of Probation, ongoing emergency and restraining order hearings, and criminal litigation.

"The Judiciary exists to protect the Commonwealth and its citizens, and I am profoundly grateful that the Judiciary rose to the challenge," he said.

Although they understand the gravity of the government's financial dilemma, Demapan said he does not believe in putting a price tag on justice or its significance to the Commonwealth.

"For this reason, we ask for your earnest consideration when we seek necessary funding," he said.

The chief justice vowed to ask only for what they need, "enough to make sure that each person who comes before us receives the justice promised by the Constitution and our representative democratic system of government."

Describing the Judiciary as strong, Demapan cited that from family court to new Supreme Court rules, from financial difficulties to improving technology and access to justice, the Judiciary "is moving forward."

He also discussed the Judiciary's "triumphs" on programs pertaining to accessibility, technology, infrastructure, education, outreach, and court administration.

CUC

From Page 1

Open Government Act requests for information related to government's professional legal services contract, justifications, billings, and invoices.

So far, Sablan has found that the government and its autonomous agencies have been paying private lawyers up to \$200 an hour and up to \$80,000 a year, depending on the contract requirements.

Sablan said for CUC alone, billings and invoices for two of five counsels exceeded \$300,000 in fiscal year 2010.

CUC also has a \$135 an hour contract with Joshua Berger as administrative hearing officer between 2009 and 2011, a \$175-an-hour professional legal services contract with Alan Barak, and \$95-an-hour contract with James Sirok.

In August 2010, Attorney General Ed Buckingham required CUC to send contracts to the Office of the Attorney General for review, following discussions about contract processing.

"As we discussed, our norm is to get contracts in/out within three business days. Contracts will either be signed off or, if there are legal issues present, the issues will be identified so the contract issues can be addressed and the contract resubmitted for approval," Buckingham told then CUC executive director Tony Muna. Abe Malae is now CUC executive director.

Name change

Besides the scope of work change, CUC's contractor also changed its name from The Law Office of Deborah E. Fisher LLC to Fisher Huesman LLC after former assistant attorney general Braddock J. Huesman joined the firm. The law firm also has a \$54,000 sole-source contract with the Department of Public Lands.

CUC acknowledges that DPL is a

'Let municipalities maintain tourist sites on Rota, Tinian'

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Marianas Visitors Authority officials are now in talks with the municipalities of Rota and Tinian for the transfer of field operations to local authorities. This would give municipalities the responsibility of maintaining their respective tourist sites.

MVA managing director Perry Tenorio and board chair Marian Aldan-Pierce said the idea was brought up to MVA during

a recent summit held at the Legislature.

The 2006 transfer of maintenance functions for Saipan tourist sites to the Department of Parks and Recreation was brought up at the summit and MVA and the Legislature are now looking at that as a model for MVA's operations on Rota and Tinian.

According to Tenorio, part of the new proposal is for MVA to also reclaim responsibility for the maintenance of Saipan tourist

sites. This has yet to be considered or acted upon by the board.

"Those have been discussed in prior meetings. They're looking at a model done in 2006 when Saipan field operation was transferred to Parks and Recreation. They want to use that model...but in contrast, there was also a recommendation from within the group handling the tourism marketing and other activities [at the summit] that Saipan field operation must return back to MVA," Tenorio

told *Saipan Tribune*.

Tenorio said that getting back this responsibility is a board policy decision, but admitted that maintaining tourist sites is an important MVA function.

"Our primary function is promotional...but it is also important that we maintain our tourist sites," he said.

He pointed out that the maintenance of tourist sites is not Parks and Recreation's primary function and is thus limited in its capacity to do the job.

MVA has six field operation personnel on Rota and two on Tinian.

Tenorio pointed out that the agency has a strong working relationship with the Tinian Mayor's Office, which shares the responsibility of keeping tourists sites clean at all times.

Tenorio does not believe the potential transfer will generate savings for MVA.

"I don't think it's a matter of savings if we took the same model in 2006... because we're

also transferring personnel and assets," he said.

Aldan-Pierce admitted that the transfer proposal has been on the board's table for a long time but it has not taken any position on the idea because it will require extensive review and assessment of the impact it would have on the agency.

"We need to discuss this matter further to know the impact on personnel and equipment. There are a lot of things that we need to consider," she added.

Man loses eye's vision in stick attack

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A man lost the vision in his right eye after being attacked with a wooden stick at the beach side of a hotel in western Garapan early Friday morning.

A physician at the Commonwealth Health Center informed police that Hank Kenny Taitano won't be able to see in his right eye.

James Fitipol Castro, 30, was arrested after the incident for assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Bail was set yesterday at \$15,000 cash. Preliminary hearing will be on Jan. 31, 2011, at 9am.

Superior Court associate

judge Kenneth L. Govendo appointed the Office the Public Defender to represent Castro.

Detective Peter A. Aldan stated in his report that Taitano had an argument on Friday at 12:20am with a Japanese female friend over a misunderstanding at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's beach side.

As Taitano and the female friend were walking to the Fiesta Resort & Spa beach side, Castro and a Lucian George approached Taitano.

As George was asking Taitano what was going on, Castro allegedly hit the victim in the face with a wooden stick.

Taitano ran toward the Koban Police Station, with Castro running after him and allegedly threatening to kill him.

Taitano managed to reach the Koban Police Station where he reported the incident.

When Koban police officer Therese Kintoki arrived at the Koban, she found the victim lying face down on the ground in front of the station. Taitano's right eye was swollen, bruised,

and bleeding.

The officer called for an ambulance and the victim was brought to the hospital.

Koban police officer Tyron Teregeyo later spotted Castro

at Hyatt's beach side and arrested him.

Aldan said the alleged weapon—a round smooth stick about three feet long—was confiscated and secured as evidence.

7 foreclosed properties on Saipan restored through federal grants

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Seven foreclosed residential properties have been rehabilitated by the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. through its Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

NSP is a funding program under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that provides emergency assistance to state and local governments to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight within the community.

Mortgage and Credit Division manager Jesse Palacios said the NSP grant enables them to rehabilitate, resale, or redevelop these homes to stabilize neighborhoods and stem the decline of house values of neighboring homes.

"Once the rehabilitation work is completed, NMHC will make these units available for purchase to low income families whose income levels fall at or below 80 percent of the area median income," he added.

Palacios told *Saipan Tribune* they were able to rehabilitate six properties in Kagman and one property in Dandan through the \$364,000 program grant awarded in 2010 through the Housing

and Economic Recovery Act of 2008.

"To make them more attractive, we provided chain link fencing, installed typhoon shutters, and we also put garages in those properties that didn't have one," he added.

Of the seven properties, Palacios said only three are occupied and four are still available for purchase by low-income households that want to own their home.

According to Palacios, clients who are waitlisted on the HOME Investment Partnerships Program or HOME Program are also given the option to avail of the rehabilitated properties.

The HOME Program provides grants to finance the construction, purchase, or rehabilitation of affordable housing for low-income residents in states and territories.

Palacios said an individual can be eligible to avail of the rehabilitated properties depending on their income and their credit history.

If a client is found unable to pay the loan based on his or her credit history, Palacios said the client can apply with a co-borrower to guarantee the loan.

For more information about the program, contact Palacios at 234-6866 or 9447 or email at jspalacios@nmhc.gov.mp.

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Mount Carmel School celebrates Catholic Schools Week

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Mount Carmel School officials and the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa endorsed yesterday the week of Jan. 30 through Feb. 4 as CNMI Catholic Schools Week to highlight the commitment of teachers and administrators in providing excellent Catholic education.

In a ceremony at the Mount Carmel Cathedral yesterday, apostolic administrator Rev. Fr. Ryan P. Jimenez was joined by Mount Carmel School president Margaret Dela Cruz, school board chair Elizabeth Balajadia, and a group of stu-

dents in launching the week-long celebration.

Jimenez said the CNMI Catholic Schools Week is in line with the national celebration and this year's theme of "Catholic Schools: A+ for America."

"All schools try to excel in academic and instill values for all of us. For Catholic education, we just don't strive for excellence in academics but also try to educate the total person and an integral part of that is the faith...I think that's what we really take pride in. It's something our students can bring with them for the rest of their lives," said Jimenez.

Dela Cruz told *Saipan Tri-*

bune that the school has a lineup of activities that will begin with a 9am Mass on Sunday.

On Monday, she said, students will help out at the Sr. Remedios School, hold a tree-planting activity at the judicial building, and do a beach clean-up. The school's donors will also be recognized in a special banquet Monday night.

On Tuesday, the traditional awarding of the MCS teacher of the year will be held at the campus, while students will be taught about vocation by special speakers.

On Thursday, members of the CNMI military will visit the elementary grade classes

and a special thanksgiving box will be given to the guests. The celebration will be capped by a field day and family night on Friday, where the school will announce its distinguished graduates for 2010.

Enrollment decline

Like other private schools on island, MCS has been experiencing a steady decline of 11 to 13 percent in its enrollment in the past three to four years, according to Dela Cruz.

At present, MCS is home to 324 students; it used to have over 400 students in previous years.

She cited economic hardship as among the primary factors of the decline, resulting in the transfer of a large number of students to public schools.

Others, she said, have left the island for good.

To increase its number of students, Dela Cruz said financial assistance and other related programs are being offered at the school. Among these are the employees' sponsorship program, which entitles staff members to sponsor students who can't afford to continue studies in Mount Carmel School by providing them a 50-percent discount.

"We also have scholarships provided by our teachers where they donate a certain amount of money every pay period to assist students," she added.

'3 Catholic schools'

There are three existing Catholic schools in the Commonwealth that will take part

in the weeklong celebration: Mount Carmel School, Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja on Rota, and St. Joseph Catholic School on Tinian.

The Catholic Church on Saipan brought Catholic education to the Commonwealth in 1952 when it established the Mount Carmel School. In 1989, the people of Rota established Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja, while St. Joseph Catholic School was established in 1997.

"I urge the faithful of the diocese to participate in observance of this week in appropriate ways that will help promote an awareness and appreciation of the values that Catholic education instills in our children, which enhances the quality of life for all our people," said Jimenez.



SEARCH OPERATION

U.S. COAST GUARD/PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS ANGELA HENDERSON

GUAM—Firefighter II Kevin Reilly, with the Guam Fire Department, also a Coast Guard reservist, sets tape to mark off the beach area where four fishermen went to set nets at First Beach, Ipan, Talofofo, Jan. 24, 2011. Coast Guard, Navy, Guam Police Department, and Guam Fire Department rescue crews conduct shoreline and water searches for the two fishermen who did not return on Jan. 22, 2011.

Reduction-in-force task force in wait-and-see mode for now

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Reduction-in-Force Task Force headed by Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos is in a wait-and-see mode whether to recommend further work hour cuts or start letting go of employees amid the government's financial woes.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that a determination has not been made yet.

"Currently, Lt. Governor Inos and members of the task force are reviewing the figures on a daily basis to determine the appropriate financial projections. At the same time, we continue to monitor legislative activity in terms of the priorities laid out from the leadership meetings. Should those measures move forward, we will have to consider the fiscal impact that

will result," Demapan told *Saipan Tribune*.

Those measures include a \$6.2 million incentive program for travel agencies that bring in tourists from Osaka and Nagoya during months when arrivals are generally at their lowest, lifting some restrictions on smoking in hotel areas, and removing the \$250 million price tag in privatizing the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

The Fitial administration is also looking at closing certain functions that cannot at this time be considered essential and abolish redundant or nonessential positions, which is also among the recommendations of an independent desk audit contractor that reviewed the Department of Public Safety and Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

Bridge Capital launches 2011 Art Competition

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Bridge Capital, LLC has launched its 2nd Annual Art Competition, which aims to promote and support the talented artists of the CNMI.

"Since last year's contest was well received, we decided to make it an annual event," office and senior asset manager Lisa Frederickson told *Saipan Tribune*.

The art competition is open to any CNMI resident who has been residing in the Commonwealth for at least one year.

The Open competition is for individuals 18 years and older, while the K-12 competition is for students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Frederickson said the art competition has two categories: two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of art, and that the entry must have a CNMI theme.

All entries must be the artist's original work. No computer generated or digitally enhanced submissions will be accepted. A maximum of two entries can be submitted per person, said Frederickson.

The winning artworks will be selected by a panel of judges composed of government leaders and business community representatives.

Winners for the open competition will receive \$500 for third prize, \$1,000 for second prize, \$1,500 for first prize, and \$2,500 for the grand prize.

The top student entries from kindergarten to 12th grade will receive \$100, while the classroom teacher of the winning student will receive \$100 store credit for school supplies at National Office Supply.

Deadline for submission of entries is on May 2 at 5pm.

"We are giving an advanced notice to all interested artists so that they'll have more time to prepare their entries," said Frederickson.

According to Frederickson, there will be an awards presentation and winning entries will be displayed in an arts exhibition to be attended by the winners and their family members.

Frederickson encouraged all local artists to participate in this annual art competition. For more information, contact her at 322-2222 or lmf@bccnmi.com.

Bridge Capital is an international investment banking and asset management company headquartered in the CNMI. The company is involved in a wide range of community activities and makes significant contributions to non-profit and charitable organizations serving the islands.

**Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP NO.: RFP11-DEQ-039
Submission: February 09, 2011 Time: 2:00 P.M.

**"SAIPAN STORMWATER QUALITY SAMPLING AND WATERSHED
BOUNDARY DELINEATION FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"**

The complete scope of work will be available at the DEQ front desk or can be received electronically by contacting the CRM Nonpoint Source Pollution Coordinator at (670) 664-8305, or by emailing rachel.zuercher@crn.gov.mp

Questions regarding this project may be faxed to Mr. Frank M. Rabauliman at (670) 664-8540 no later than the close of business, **January 27, 2011**.

This is a federally funded project, as such, local preference **is not available** because its use is prohibited by federal law granting funding for this project.

/s/ FRANK M. RABAU LIMAN
Director, DEQ

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, Procurement & Supply

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

INVITATION TO BID

ITB11-DPW/ED-041

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 09, 2011 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"LEASE OF AN OFFICE SPACE FOR THE DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC WORKS - ENERGY DIVISION"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO MS. THELMA B. INOS, DIRECTOR, ENERGY DIVISION, VIA E-MAIL TO cnmienergy@gmail.com OR FAX TO (670) 664-4483 **NO LATER THAN 4:30 P.M., LOCAL TIME, JANUARY 27, 2011.**

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT, AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D).

/s/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
SECRETARY, DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

/s/ THELMA B. INOS
DIRECTOR, ENERGY DIVISION

/s/ MICHAEL J. ADA
CNMI ARRA STATE LEAD

SAN VICENTE PARISH CHURCH
INVITATION TO BID

For: Painting of the Church
 (Entire Interior and Exterior Surfaces)

Job will require:

1. Proper Preparation of Surfaces to be Painted
2. Cleaning & Repair if Required.
3. Provide Materials for Surface Preparation.
4. Provide Labor for Surface Preparation and Painting.
5. Recommendation of Superior Quality and Quantity of Paint required.

Paint will be provided by San Vicente Church. Pre Bid Conference at San Vicente Church on January 26, 2011 at 2:00pm. Closing of Bid will be on Friday, February 4, 2011.

Point of Contact: Fr. Rey Rosal 235-8208

Approved by:
Pastor Fr. Rey Rosal
Parish Finance Council - Antonio S. Muna

First American Bully show on Feb. 19

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Marianas PitBull Alliance and Alpha Dogg Productions are gearing up for the “Who’s the Alpha Dog Bully Show” slated for Feb. 19, 2011, from 1pm to 6pm, at the Garapan Central Park.

MPBA marketing officer Norman Del Rosario said this would be the first Bully show on island sanctioned by the American Bully Kennel Club, the official registry worldwide for the American Bully, a dog breed created in 1990. The breed gained recognition and was established in 2004 following the inception of ABKC.

“The dog show will feature competition among different Bully breeds, displays for cars, big bikes, café bikes, jumper for kids, as well as food and drinks booths,” Del Rosario told *Saipan Tribune*.

Del Rosario said there will be entry fees for competition and non-competition per dog. MPBA members who want to enter their dogs in the competition will have to pay \$25, while non-members pay \$50.

For dog owners who do not want to enter their dogs in the competition, there will be an entry fee of \$10 for MPBA members and \$20 for non-members per dog.

For a \$2 entrance fee, the general public will have a chance to win exciting raffle prizes during the show, said Del Rosario.

He noted that all entry fees are inclusive of the show/ring training to be conducted by ABKC representative Randy “Da Flynn Hawaiian” Haina from Hawaii, who will serve as the judge for the dog competition.

Representatives of different kennel groups in



The American Bully is a dog breed created in 1990.

Guam will also be flying in for the dog show, including David Crisostomo of Irondogs Pitbull Kennels and Chris Castro of Bullies of Barri-gada Heights.

Major sponsors for the “Who’s the Alpha Dog Bully Show” are Marpac, IT&E, and Aquarius Beach Towers.

According to Del Rosario, the dog show is a great opportunity for Bully owners, both MPBA members and non-members alike. “The dog show will be a good exposure for all Bully owners on island as they can get training from an actual ABKC representative and interact with other owners.”

Del Rosario said MPBA will be conducting a participants’ meeting on Feb. 6, from 2pm to 4pm, at the CNMI Museum grounds.

For more information, contact Del Rosario at 287-2875 or email mpba670@gmail.com.

Bordallo is ranking member of Armed Services Subcommittee

Retains position on Natural Resources Committee

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo was chosen Wednesday last week as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Readiness for the 112th Congress by Democratic members of the House Armed Services Committee. As ranking member, Bordallo is the Subcommittee’s most senior Democratic representative.

The Subcommittee on Readiness has oversight jurisdiction over military readiness, training, logistics and maintenance issues and programs. The subcommittee is also responsible for all military construction, depot policy, civilian personnel policy, environmental policy, installations and family housing issues, including the base closure process, and energy policy and programs of the Department of Defense.

The Democratic Caucus met

last week to approve the recommendations of the Democratic Steering & Policy Committee.

In addition to her position on HASC, Bordallo will also retain her position as a member of the



Bordallo

House Committee on Natural Resources. The committee will meet in the coming weeks to

organize for the 112th Congress. Bordallo will not be ranking member of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans & Insular Affairs since members of the caucus are forbidden from holding two subcommittee leadership positions.

“I appreciate the opportunity to serve as the ranking member of

the Subcommittee on Readiness,” said Bordallo. “I will continue my work to ensure that the Subcommittee performs appropriate oversight of military build-up on Guam. The jurisdiction of the Readiness Subcommittee lends itself to better address infrastructure and environmental concerns regarding the military buildup and that they are adequately addressed by the Department of Defense. I have worked closely with Chairman of the Subcommittee, Congressman Randy Forbes of Virginia, on a variety of issues and look forward to continuing our bi-partisan approach to a variety of matters before the Subcommittee. I am humbled that I will have the opportunity to take the Democratic lead on the Subcommittee following the departure of Chairman Solomon Ortiz who was a good friend and strong leader on readiness issues.” (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNMI MATHLETES

The CNMI MathCourt Team that will compete in the May 13 League Championship in Kansas City, Missouri are Hyun Bin Ham (Calvary Christian Academy), Hanbert Jeong (Marianas Baptist Academy), Minchong Kang (Saipan Southern High School), Hye Young Oh (Saipan Southern High School), Manatsu Omori (Marianas Baptist Academy), and Han Byol Yu (Marianas Baptist Academy). Five of the six team members are returning students from last year’s team.

Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana
Ofisinan I Gubietno
Dipattamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE EXTENSION FOR PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (a) and (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to recommend the extension of a lease on certain public land in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This lease extension is subject to the approval of the Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature in accordance with the mandate set out in Article XI, § 5(c) of the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

- i. The leased premises is described as public land Lot No. 151 R 01, containing an area of approximately 8,049 square meters, more or less, situated in Sabana, Rota. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.
- ii. The lessee is Micronesian Telecommunications Corporation d.b.a. IT&E, a CNMI Corporation. The Board of Directors of the Corporation are Ricardo C. Delgado, Jovino G. Lorenzo, Jr., Jose Ricardo PR Delgado, E. Norbert Garrett, Robert R. Anderson, Jose S. Dela Cruz, John Noel Doherty, Keiji Ikemura, and Masao Miyamoto.

The President of the Corporation is Jose Ricardo PR Delgado. The Treasurer is Lawrence P. Knecht. The Secretary is Fe D. Vicencio.

- iii. The proposed lease extension was negotiated by Mr. Lawrence P. Knecht.
- iv. The lessee shall continue to use the premises solely for the purpose of maintaining and operating telecommunications transmitters, antennas, and activities related thereto.

The term of the lease agreement extension is 15 years.

- v. Copies of the proposed lease extension agreements may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; in Songsong, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.
- vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public lands in Sabana, Rota.
- vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before February 4, 2011 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NOTISIA POT MAPROPONEN INEKSTENDEN INATKILON TANO' PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106(a) yan (b) gi Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i Dipattamenton Tano’ Pupbliku guini ha nã'i notisia ni intesiona para u rekomenda i inekstenden inatkilon gi pumalu na tãno' pupbliku siha giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Isla Marianas siha. Este na inekstenden atkilon siha manmasuheto para i inapruuban i Lehislaturan Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islan Marianas gi sigun ni mamãnda ni mapega huyong gi Attikilu XI, § 5(c) gi Konstitusion i Sangkattan na Islan Marianas siha. Maseha hãyi na petsona siha gi halom i pupbliku henerãt siha ha na'hãlom i imfotmasion, opiñon, pat testamoñon kinentra siha gi tinahguen propositu siha ni para i atkilon tãno' pupbliku. Sigi mãs mo'na mapribeniyi ginen i Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i tinatititayi pettanesen imfotmasion ni madimãnda ni debi na u mapupblika.

- i. I lugãt atkilon siha madeskribe komu tano' pupbliku Lot No. 151 R 01, kinonsiste ãrian kãsi guaha 8,049 square meters, potlumenus mãs, ni gaige gi Sabãna Luta. I kopian i pumalu na lugãt gaige na gumuaha gi Dipattamenton Tano' Pupbliku siha ni para i rikonosimientu.
- ii. I manatikikila i Micronesian Telecommunications Corporation d.b.a. IT & E, i CNMI na Korporasion. I Kuetpon i Direktot siha gi Korporasion si Ricardo C. Delgado, Jovino G. Lorenzo, Jr., Jose Ricardo PR Delgado, E. Norbert Garrett, Robert R. Anderson, Jose S. Dela Cruz, John Noel Doherty, Keiji Ikemura, yan si Masao Miyamoto.

I Presidenten i Korporasion si Ricardo PR Delgado. I Tresurãrio si Lawrence P. Knecht. I Sekritãrio si Fe D. Vecencio.

- iii. I mapropone na ekstension atkilon manegosio gi as Siñot Lawrence P. Knecht.
- iv. I manatikikila debi na u kontinua umusa i lugãt siha uniku para i rason i maneran maintaining yan operating telecommunications transmitters, antennas yan maseha hãfa na mana'achule' na aktibidãt siha guihi.

I teman i kontrãtan atkilon ha ekstende gi 15 ãños.

- v. Kopian i manmapropone na ekstension atkilon na kontrãta siha siha machule' gi ofisinan i Dipattamenton Tano' Pupbliku siha, gaige gi segundo bibienda 2nd floor gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan; Songsong, Luta; pat i primet 1st floor gi Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.
- vi. I Dipattamenton Tano' Pupbliku siha tãya' ha risibi tinahguen propositu siha para suheton atkilon tãno' pupbliku siha gi Sabãna, Luta.
- vii. I Sekritãrion i Dipattamenton Tano' Pupbliku siha debi na u akseptã i tinige' i imfotmasion, opiñon yan testamoñon kinentra pat tinahguen propositu siha ginen i manggai interes na pattida siha gi pat ãntes di Fibreru 4, 2011 gi ofisinan Dipattamenton Tano' Pupbliku siha ni gaige Saipan, Luta, pat Tinian.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sãngi Tãlil ye 106 (b) mellól Allégghúl Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwilil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipel, Commonwealth Téel Falúwasch Marianas. Akkilon yeel nge ebwe mwir sangi alughulughul Sow Ffeerul Allegh mellól Commonwealth Northern Mariana Islands iye e allégghewow mellól Article XI, Tãlil 5(c) mellól Alléggh Lapalap Northern Mariana Islands. Schóókka eyoor máfiyeer nge rebwe isisilong aghiyghiir, awewee, aingingil reel pomwol akkilonul ammwelil falúweer toulap mebwal Allégghúl Toulap ye 15-2, e ayoora, lamal awewee kka rebwe mweiti ngáli milikka ebwe akkatééló.

- i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap nge ekke bwáari Lot No. 151 R 01, ebwe eyoor walangaras ebwughuw faigh me tiwoow (8, 049), elapeló me ngãre eghús, elo Sabana Luuta. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor mereel Bwulasiyool Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngãre óubwe ghuley fischiy.
- ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Micronesian Corporation d.b.a. IT&E CNMI Corporation. Mwiischil assamwool kkaal mellól Corporation nge Richard C. Delgado, Juvino G. Lorenzo, Jr., Jose Ricardo PR Delgado, E. Norbert Garrett, Robert R. Anderson, Jose S. Dela Cruz, John Noel Doherty, Keiji Ikemura, me Masao Miyamoto.

Samwoolul Corporation nge Jose Ricardo PR Delgado. Treasurer nge Lawrence P. Knecht. Sekkeretoria nge Fe D. Vicencio

- iii. Schóól aweweel pomwol akkilon ye e sobwosobw nge Mr Lawrence P. Knecht.
- iv. Schóól akkilon ebwe ammwela bwuley me ayoora Telecommunications transmitters, antennas, me lamal kka eyoor

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon nge reweigh me limoow ráagh (25 years)

- v. Tilighial akkilon yeel nge emmwel óubwe bwughi mereel bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, elo aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llo Tuturam, Seipél; aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) mellól Songsong, Luuta; me ngãre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.
- vi. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáal bweibwogh mwo pomwol akkilon ye elo Lower Base, Seipel..
- vii. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge ebwe bwughil ischil mángemáng, aingingil mereel amweyút mmwal Máaischigh (February) 4, 2011 mellól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta, Tchúlúyól.

Proposed amendments to zoning law

The Commonwealth Zoning board is reminding the public to review the text amendments and preliminary zoning map changes at the website <http://www.zoning.gov.mp> under the "Publications" page.

Zoning said these amendments have taken into consideration the various comments and suggestions that have been received from the Legislature and the public.

The Commonwealth Zoning Office and board encourage the

community to review the amendments and provide comments.

"We want to encourage the community to review these amendments and let us know what concerns they have," said Zoning chair Diego Blanco. "We have scheduled public hearings around the CNMI and our staff and board look forward to meet-

OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE

First public open house to explain the proposals:

Date: Wednesday, Jan. 26
Time: 2pm to 6pm
Place: Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe

Second public open house to explain the proposals:

Date: Wednesday, Feb. 2
Time: 8am to 11am
Place: Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe

ing and hearing from the community."

To review the amendments, go to: <http://www.zoning.gov.mp/> and refer to "Text Amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law - February 2011"

The Zoning Office has also scheduled open houses on Jan. 6 and Feb 2 at the Susupe Multi-Purpose Center and is encouraging the public to attend these events. (PR)

Info session for master's degree in library science set tomorrow

The Northern Marianas College will be hosting an information session about the LEAP scholarship program tomorrow, Jan. 26, from 9am to 12pm, at the Olympio T. Borja Memorial Library located in Building O. All interested members of the community are welcome to attend.

The LEAP scholarships will provide 23 residents of the CNMI and U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands with full tuition and travel-related costs for a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of North Texas.

Dr. Yvonne Chandler, Associate Professor at UNT, and Jane Barnwell from Hawaii's Pacific Resources for Education and Learning will be on Saipan to promote the scholarship program.

The scholarships were made possible through grant funding from the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program. Successful

applicants will receive full tuition costs to begin their studies in August, a laptop, and broadband connectivity costs. Those interested need to submit their scholarship application by April 1, 2011.

Matthew Pastula, NMC's director of Library Programs & Services, is the CNMI contact person for the scholarship program.

"I'm excited to be part of this opportunity that can help so many people obtain a master's degree," Pastula said. "I would like to see a large number of applicants from the CNMI further their education through this grant funded scholarship."

Those interested in applying for the scholarship are strongly encouraged to attend the info session on Jan. 26, 2011 to meet the coordinators. Applicants can also visit www.lis.unt.edu/leap/ for eligibility requirements, scholarship information and an application form. (NMC)

Storm building to cyclone, targets Tonga

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (The Samoa News/PIR)—A tropical storm that passed over the two Samoas on Saturday is heading directly for Nukualofa, Tonga, as it grew to a cyclone.

According to the London-based Tropical Storm Risk world forecasting service, tropical storm Wilma was expected to build to a cyclone by Monday, Jan. 24, after moving south of American Samoa and track to hit Tonga's outlying Neiafu, in the Vava'u group, today (Wednesday Tonga time). The storm was expected to reach Tongatapu on the Thursday, Tonga time.

Wilma on Sunday was on a south, southwest track to the east of Wallis and Futuna and brushing Fiji's outlying Lau group of islands.

Meanwhile, all islands of American Samoa have been under a gale watch since 6 a.m. Friday and the weather service plans to issue another update around 6 p.m. today (Friday) or earlier if warranted.

Local residents appear to be heeding the advice of local authorities to get prepared with people heading to stores to purchase canned food, flash lights, candles, batteries, bottled water and ply wood.

With a tropical depression centered about 250 miles west of Tutuila, the U.S. Coast Guard has issued an advisory to mariners and boaters dealing with preparations as the weather system is slowly heading to American Samoa.

The advisory followed a meeting held Friday morning between the local Coast Guard unit with territorial authorities and port users, and boat owners as well as shipping companies.

"All mariners, vessel owners and harbor facility operators are encouraged to take steps to ensure vessels and facilities are prepared for the anticipated heavy winds and seas," said Lt. Trevor Parra, supervisor of the Coast Guard Marine Detachment unit in Pago Pago.

HONOR ROLL

Saipan Community School Honor Roll list for 2nd Quarter

6th Grade

A Honor (3.5 – 3.99): Carl Dela Cruz, Colin Ramsey, Ringo Leung, Yu Bin Park, Stephanie Lee

B Honor (3.00 – 3.49): Kevin Lee, Elnathan Wong

7th Grade

A Honor Roll (3.5 – 3.99): Quintin Ramsey, Tammy Ack-

erman, Joel Jang

B Honor Roll (3.00 – 3.49): Jason Lee, Ji Hoon Lee, Mary Grace Tiglaio, Tommy Choi, Jameson Kui Lee, Jun Pyo Jeon

8th Grade

A Honor Roll (3.5 – 3.99): Jee Hyun Lee, Emily Dewitt

B Honor Roll (3.5 – 3.49): Han Mi Oh, Lydin, Johnson, Jin Pyo Jeon, Steven Chok, Rena Son, Rebekah Eslin, Brianna Fajardo, Xuan Jun Lu

A. Samoa seeks pay hike for retirees

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa, (Samoa News/PIR)—American Samoa Gov. Togiola Tulafono is seeking legislative approval of a 4 percent hike in the cost of living allowance for government retirees.

In a Jan. 15 letter to the Fono leadership, Tulafono explained that the COLA adjustment is for government retirees who retired on, or prior to Sept. 30, 2008.

"The current position of fiscal strength that our government holds today is due in no small part to the immense efforts of ASG's past workforce," he wrote. "This legislation recognizes those invaluable contributions to our financial security. This cost of living allowance increase shall be paid retroac-

tively from Oct. 1, 2008 and it would increase monthly annuities for ninety-one percent of our retirees."

The COLA hike proposal is now being put into bill form for introduction in both the Senate and House. Lawmakers will be requesting an actuary report on the retirement fund when the bill is reviewed, in accordance with local retirement statute.

Some lawmakers also plan to obtain data from the Retirement Office as to the total number of retirees receiving benefits as well as the total number of retirees who would benefit from the proposed COLA hike and what impact, if any, this proposal will have on the retirement fund itself.



NEW CHRISTIAN

Welcome to the Christian world, Rodrey Flores, who was baptized at San Vicente Church last Saturday. Rodrey is the son of Yeye and Cheche Flores. Greetings come from the Tubale family. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Birthday greeting for Kaegel Taitano, who is celebrating his special day today, Jan. 25, 2011! Once a year I get the chance to wish you birthday cheer. It pleases me no end to say, I wish you another great year. So happy birthday to you Kae, from the bottom of my heart. And may your good times multiply, 'til they're flying off the chart! We love you! Greetings come from PiDoMel, MJ, Nia, and the familia. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 25, 1999

Cordial talks soured by 'secret' bill

Negotiators from the Northern Marianas and the United States decided at the last minute to cancel a joint media conference that would have been the culminating activity of the four-day 902 talks. That followed disagreement at the last leg of the four-day consultations over plans of the U.S. panel to introduce a new legislation that will apply federal laws on immigration, minimum wage and Customs to the CNMI. Members of the CNMI 902 team, who were otherwise upbeat about the way the talks initially went, were unaware about a revised takeover proposal that had already been drafted until Washington negotiator Edward B. Cohen broke the news in a morning talk show. CNMI rejected a draft joint statement prepared by Cohen and which was supposed to be released to the media. The draft would have contained agreement of both panels to work together in crafting a legislation to phase in federal immigration and minimum wage laws.

Chamber bids time to diversify economy

Washington must provide a bailout package to the CNMI to make up for the shortfall of revenue which it will lose when the federal laws on labor and immigration are implemented on the island, according to the Saipan Chamber of Commerce. In a position paper submitted to last week's 902 negotiations, the Chamber warned that a federal takeover would devastate businesses on the island which are already reeling from the effects of Asia's currency crisis. The Chamber asked Edward B. Cohen, U.S. President Clinton's representative in the 902 talks if the federal government would be willing to help nurture the island's economy back to health since it will take years before businesses in the CNMI can recover due to Asia's economic problems.

Jan. 25, 2000

Loans eyed to augment government scholarship

The administration has completed drafting a proposal that will set in place a new scheme to extend adequate financial assistance to local college students without putting much pressure on the depleting public coffers. The proposal is now up for review by officials of the Public School System and the Northern Marianas College, as well as members of the 12th CNMI Legislature. Forced by diminishing resources, the government has been exploring alternative ways to continue providing local college students with financial assistance while assuring that funding for other essential programs remain in place.

US census validates growth in NMI economy

The United States Department of Commerce has reported positive developments on the Commonwealth's economy, primarily fueled by growth in the garment manufacturing industry. The Northern Mariana Islands witnessed a significant growth in the manufacturing industry in a span of five years, or between 1992 and 1997, according to the most recent economic census released by the U.S. commerce department. The number of paid manufacturing employees doubled from 6,300 to 13,700 during the period under review, disclosed the report contained in the 1997 Economic Census of Outlying Areas-CNMI.

Jan. 25, 2001

Private firms' help eyed to identify needed labor

The Public School System will tap the assistance of various private and public agencies on the island to identify the needed labor force in hopes to sustain the growing demands of the Commonwealth. Aside from possible collaborative effort with these businesses, the school system is also looking into the effective implementation of on-the-job training program to help students gain first-hand work experiences. Acting Associate Commissioner on Secondary Education Rita A. Sablan discussed these probabilities following the recently conducted Vocational Education Training.

NMC joins Pacific Association for Voc Ed

The Northern Marianas College recently joined hands with representatives from across the Pacific region to create the Pacific Association for Vocational Education (PAVE). This association has pledged to increase the awareness and support for vocational education and training throughout Micronesia and the Pacific region, and it has the support of the US Department of the Interior's Operations and Maintenance Improvement Program. NMC Dean of Continuing Education Ed Camacho and NMC Vocational Director Dr. Jack Angello attended a federally-sponsored Pacific vocational meeting in Palau.

INSIDE THE NEW DAWN

Army unit begins video series chronicling efforts in Iraq

By MAJ. JASON BILLINGTON
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

BABIL PROVINCE, Iraq—When the U.S. government announced the end of combat operations in Iraq last Aug. 31, it created some confusion about the military's role in the country.

One unit in southern Iraq is doing its part to clear up that confusion by defining Operation New Dawn in a video series that will chronicle the unit's historic fourth deployment to Iraq. The first episode in the planned series describes the importance of the mission through the perspective of soldiers and leaders of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

"You're deploying where?"

"I thought we were already out of Iraq."

These exchanges were common in the days leading up to 3rd ACR's August deployment as the first Advise and Assist Brigade under the newly named Operation New Dawn. In their responses, soldiers quickly found themselves acting as ambassadors of the continued U.S. commitment to Iraq.

"I was talking to one of my acquaintances at a local store, and she seemed surprised that I was being sent to Iraq," said 2nd Lt. Gregory White of Dallas, Texas, who deployed to Iraq in November 2010 after the change of mission to Operation New Dawn. White now works as a liaison



U.S. ARMY PHOTO/STAFF SGT. GARRETT RALSTON
Sgt. David Bamba, a broadcast journalist from the 305th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, interviews a soldier from 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Wasit Province, Iraq. Bamba has traveled extensively around five provinces in southern Iraq to highlight the activities of 3rd ACR Soldiers in support of Operation New Dawn.

for the 3rd ACR, coordinating transportation for distinguished visitors to the Regiment's various bases in southern Iraq. "I explained that although the nature of the U.S. mission had changed, we still had obligations to fulfill to the people of Iraq."

Operation New Dawn is the name given to the new mission of advising and assisting Iraqi Security Forces to take the lead in securing their country from external and internal threats. It eclipsed the former moniker, Operation Iraqi Freedom, which represented the liberation of Iraqis from the oppressive re-

gime of Saddam Hussein.

The recent achievements of the people of Iraq in electing a representative government as well as an overall decrease in violence in the country have paved the way for the phased withdrawal of U.S. Forces. Under the current security agreement with the government of Iraq, all U.S. Forces are scheduled to leave the country by Dec. 31, 2011.

"I like to think of it as the last member of a long distance relay race," said Lt. Col. Michael True, a native of Fredericksburg, Texas, and chief of operations

for the 3rd ACR. "The baton has been passed from one unit to another unit for the last seven years, and we're the unit lucky enough to get passed the baton to finish the race."

The series, titled "Rifles Reflections," harkens to the historic motto penned by Gen. Winfield Scott after the battle of Contreras in the Mexican War on Aug. 20, 1847, when he called the proud warriors of the Regiment the "Brave Rifles" for their courageous acts.

"I didn't think I would be a part of something so significant historically," said Sgt. David Bamba, a native of Guam and the broadcast journalist who produced the video. "It's an honor to work on something like this because this represents

what New Dawn is about."

Bamba, who deployed to Iraq with the 305th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment of Hawaii, has been traveling around the country's southern provinces capturing footage and interviews of 3rd ACR soldiers for the project.

The 3rd ACR is the last unit of its kind in the Army. Upon completion of its mission in Iraq, the unit is scheduled to transform to a brigade combat team equipped with Stryker vehicles, making this the last deployment of a traditional armored cavalry regiment in U.S. history.

The first part of the series, "Part I: Rising to a New Dawn," is scheduled for release in January on the unit's social media site at www.facebook.com/3dACR.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law and Official Zoning Maps

We ask for your comments on a number of proposed amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 and the accompanying Official Zoning Maps. The proposed amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law affect many parts of the law including: definitions of terms, exemptions and area of jurisdiction, the types of uses permitted in certain areas (zones), standards (requirements) for temporary uses, standards for specified permanent uses, fences, subdivisions and administrative variances.

Public Open House to explain the proposals:

Date: Wednesday, January 26th, 2011

Time: 2:00pm to 6:00 pm

Place: Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe

Public Open House to explain the proposals:

Date: Wednesday, February 2nd, 2011

Time: 8:00 am to 11:00 am

Place: Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe

The proposed amendments and map changes may be viewed at the following locations:

Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library

Zoning Board website: www.zoning.gov.mp (publications page)

Please call the Zoning Office for updated information regarding availability.

Public Hearing and Special Board Meeting on 2/11/11 to hear final public comments and then make a decision to approve in whole or in part the changes to the Official Saipan Zoning Law and Zoning Maps. The Zoning Board's decision will be forwarded to the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation for its consideration.

Date: Friday, February 11th, 2011

Time: 2:00pm

Place: Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office and they must be received at the Zoning Office by 4:30pm Thursday, February 10th, 2011. Send written comments via e-mail to dwiyatt@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or hand-deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearings, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Office at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008.

/s/ **Diego C. Blanco, Zoning Board Chairman**

Borja graduates from US House page program

Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo, right, is joined by Chris Borja and parents Mike and Julie Borja during the U.S. House of Representatives Page Program Graduation for the Fall Class of 2010.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo announced Friday the graduation of Christopher Borja from the U.S. House of Representatives Page Program.

She was joined by several of her colleagues and Borja's parents, Mike and Julie Borja, in the Cannon Caucus Room on Capitol Hill to thank the House Page Fall Class of 2010 for their work and service to the House of Representatives.

Borja is the fourth individual nominated by Bordallo to graduate from House Page Program. He joins Jon Junior Calvo (2004), Breanna Lai (2007), and Liesl Alexis Flores (2009) as page alumni and will return to

Fr. Duenas Memorial School to complete his junior year of high school.

As a page, Borja assisted House leadership and Member of Congress in carrying out logistical and administrative support in the Hall of the House and throughout the Capitol Complex. As part of his duties, Borja offered legislative assistance to the Speaker and House Leadership, served as a messenger between the Capitol and House office buildings, and prepared the House Floor for sessions.

He also took classes in the Library of Congress, where he fulfilled one semester of junior-level high school requirements, and he resided in the Page Dormitory a

few blocks from the Capitol.

"Today's graduation ceremony highlighted the important function congressional pages fulfill in ensuring smooth operations in the House of Representatives," said Bordallo. "As a page, Chris was front and center to a variety of important issues that affect our nation, and he witnessed, firsthand, the inner workings of the legislative branch. He is a bright and motivated young man who has represented our island well, and I congratulate him on his graduation from the Page Program. I am confident that the experiences he had and relationships he built while on Capitol Hill will serve him well in the future, and I expect great things from him." (PR)

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
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EDITORIAL

Pushing China, quietly

There are many metrics by which to judge the summit between President Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao, but one has attracted the most attention: Did Obama adequately stand up for human rights in China? Much as we would have preferred a more full-throated criticism of China's abysmal record—including the imprisonment of Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo—we recognize that Obama was required to balance principle and protocol.

The principle part took place largely in private. Describing his talks with Hu, Obama said: "I reaffirmed America's fundamental commitment to the universal rights of all people. That includes basic human rights like freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association and demonstration, and of religion—rights that are recognized in the Chinese constitution." At a joint news conference, Obama also called for greater dialogue between the government of China and representatives of the Dalai Lama.

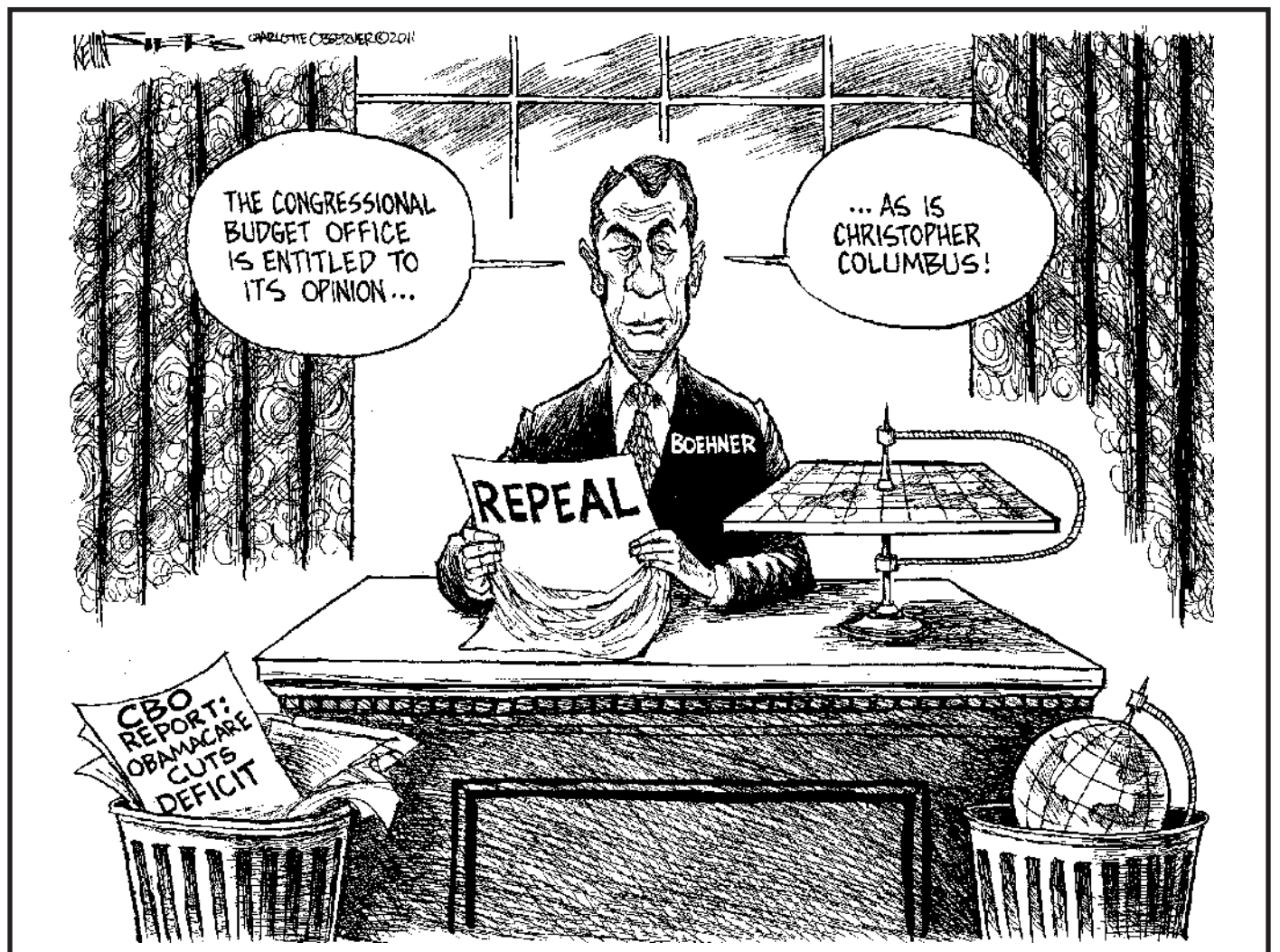
Could the president have been more passionate and pointed? Of course. Last week, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton delivered a speech in which she said that "America will continue to speak out and to press China when it censors bloggers and imprisons activists; when religious believers, particularly those in unregistered groups, are denied full freedom of worship; when lawyers and legal advocates are sent to prison simply for representing clients who challenge the government's positions."

That was full-throated, and we were pleased to hear it. Obama, by contrast, was more oblique, in deference to the fact that his words would be weighed more carefully by the Chinese. Nevertheless, Hu seems to have received the message. He acknowledged at the news conference that "a lot still needs to be done in China in terms of human rights." Brief and not very specific, it was still a remarkable admission, even when discounted by the fact that Hu was addressing an American audience.

The history of American foreign policy is replete with examples of human rights being sidelined by strategic or economic considerations. In the 1970s, for example, President Gerald Ford was accused of prizing detente with the Soviet Union so much that he refused to meet the dissident writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

The argument for pragmatism holds in the contemporary relationship between China and the United States. The two nations are economically interdependent; Chinese cooperation is vital in restraining the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea. Even so, Obama called Hu's attention to China's violations of human rights. He was judicious and judgmental at the same time.

(c) 2011, Los Angeles Times



What we can learn from another tragedy

I am playing dead by the wheel of an airplane on a jungle airstrip. Someone stands over me and empties five bullets from a semiautomatic weapon into the right side of my body. I survive. This is not a dream.

On that fateful day, Nov. 18, 1978, I was one of the few to survive the ambush by armed cult members of the Peoples Temple in Jonestown, Guyana. I was an aide to Rep. Leo Ryan who lay near me, dead, on the tarmac after these monsters shot him 45 times—the last congressman to be shot and killed in the line of duty. We were investigating conditions at Jonestown after constituents complained their relatives were being held against their will by Jones.

Rep. Ryan was doing his job as was Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in Tucson on Jan. 8. This time a troubled young man with a semiautomatic Glock fitted with a 30-magazine clip opened fire, killing six people and wounding 13, including my colleague "Gabby."

In the months after my travail, I spent many hours, even days, trying to make sense about what had happened. In the end I realized that it was simply incomprehensible. I would have to move on—to turn my moniker from victim to survivor and to do something constructive with my life.

I vowed never to take another day for granted, to live every day as fully as possible and to commit my "second" life to public service. Gabby now has a "second" life as well. I hope we can work together to bring some sanity to our nation's gun laws.

In 2004 the federal ban on assault weapons expired under the Bush administration. I ask you, do we need AK-47s to kill elk?

The Constitution provides for the right to bear arms, but I doubt the Founding Fathers had the foresight to consider that one day people with severe emotional problems could easily acquire guns capable of killing 20 or more people in a matter of seconds.

The response in Arizona has been disconcerting. Sales of the \$499 Glock special, according to Bloomberg News, have been brisk as people said they rushed to buy the gun before the government banned its sale. This is the same type of gun used in the 2007 massacre at Virginia Tech.

More semiautomatic weapons won't stop violence; they will only increase the likelihood that innocent people will die by gunfire.

Public opinion appears to favor "hands off our gun." In a 2010 Gallup poll only 44 percent of Americans said the laws covering the sale of firearms should be stricter, matching Gallup's record-low on the question when asked in 2009. The percentage of people favoring stricter laws has been gradually declining over the last 20 years with a pinnacle of 78 percent for tougher gun controls in 1990.

Substantially more Americans support a ban on assault weapons and semiautomatic firearms, like the one used in the Tucson and Virginia Tech shootings. In a 2009 Times/CBS News poll, 54 percent of Americans, including about half of respondents who have a gun in their home, said they favored a nationwide assault weapons ban.

Even if we do not ban these weapons, we need to enforce existing laws and to close loopholes. Under current federal law, it is illegal for anyone who has been "adjudicated as a mental defective or com-

By JACKIE SPEIER
Sacramento Bee

Jackie Speier, a Democrat, is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from California. She wrote this for the Sacramento Bee.



mitted to a mental institution" to purchase a firearm (the Tucson shooter wasn't in this category). Not until 1993, when the Brady Law was signed, were buyers' backgrounds checked and verified.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, out of the 78 million background checks conducted between 1998 and 2007, only 2,608 denials were based on mental health disqualification. The low rate of denial might be comforting if the information in the background system was complete and accurate, but it's not. In 2002, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System contained only 90,000 records of those disqualified under the mental health provision of the law.

Nearly all of those records came from institutionalized veterans. According to the Government Accountability Office, at least 2.6 million people should have been included in the system.

Things weren't much better by 2006: 234,628 disqualifying mental health records were in the system. In short, if the GAO's estimate is still correct, at least 91 percent of the seriously mentally ill still won't be stopped by a gun-buyer background check if they so choose to buy a gun.

The Department of Justice in 2005 found that 28 states—including Arizona—file zero or very few mental health records with the NICS, five states supply some records, and 17 states—including California—either supply a large number or have a large number of disqualifying mental health records in their own databases.

In 2007, changes to federal law required states, as a condition of federal assistance, to make their mental health records available to the NICS. Thus far, only 11 states have received funding under the bill. Penalties begin this year, but states are eligible to receive waivers if they can show they are making a reasonable effort to comply or if they have privacy laws that prevent releasing mental health records.

In short, we are in a dangerous situation. The public doesn't trust the government to keep guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't own them, and the clear shortcomings of the current system partly supports that mistrust.

Both the law and its administration seem designed to allow the killing rather than the saving of lives. Ideally, we need leaders to say "no" to semiautomatic weapon sales to the general public and "yes" to stronger enforcement of laws to prevent the mentally ill from owning guns.

In aspiring to the words of President Barack Obama's call at the Tucson memorial last week, we need to appeal to our better angels and do something meaningful and enduring for the fallen.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

John Paul II's fast track to sainthood

The Roman Catholic Church has either a very good or a very bad sense of humor. The Vatican has announced that the late Pope John Paul II will be beatified on May 1. Beatification, which requires church certification of a miracle by the would-be saint, is sort of a halfway house on the way to full sainthood, which takes two miracles. JP2's beatification, if it proceeds as scheduled, will have been the fastest on record—six years, from death to finish, edging out the previous record holder, Mother Teresa, by just a few days.

When JP2 died in 2005, 3 million people at the funeral chanted "Santo subito!" or "Sainthood now!" (not unlike at Richard Holbrooke's funeral in Washington last week). But rules is rules, as nobody knows better than the Catholic Church. JP2's successor, Pope Benedict XVI, waived the traditional requirement of a five-year waiting period before the process can even begin. But he could not waive the main requirement—those pesky miracles.

Some might consider bringing down the Soviet Union something of a miracle. Or maybe running the best school systems in America. But that's not what the church means. It demands an old-fashioned, abracadabra type of miracle, such as appearing as a vision before a Catholic businessman as he is about to perform an act of illegal insider trading, or ridding an entire major sports team of athlete's foot.

In this case, JP2 wasted no time. Once he got to heaven, he immediately got to work. He hadn't been dead long when he answered the prayers of a French nun, curing her of Parkinson's

disease. You thought Parkinson's was incurable? So did I. And I have it, as did JP2 in his last years. But apparently not—if you know whom to pray to.

Sister Marie Simon-Pierre of the Congregation of Little Sisters of Catholic Maternity Wards requested JP2's intercession, and lo and behold she woke up one morning, two months after the pope had died, to discover that all of her symptoms were gone. According to the Associated Press story, she remains symptom-free today—no more trembling hands, no stumbling walk.

Of course, there is another possibility besides a miracle: Maybe she never had Parkinson's in the first place. There is no way to diagnose Parkinson's for sure; you just eliminate other possibilities—such as a brain tumor—until Parkinson's is the last malady standing, and often a welcome one, considering the alternatives. But, according to AP, "Vatican-appointed doctors" determined that "her cure had no scientific explanation."

That sounds bad, but actually it's good. If there's no scientific explanation, the explanation must be unscientific—in other words, a miracle. There's nothing like a scientific explanation to spoil everything. Fortunately, none materialized. Therefore, the Vatican doctors concluded, it was a miracle. One down, one to go.

Congratulations to Sister Marie Simon-Pierre. It's miraculous what a miracle can do. But I could use a miracle cure for Parkinson's too, as could millions of others around the world who have Parkinson's or will develop it. And one of the main impediments to such a miracle is the Roman Catholic Church. The most likely

BY MICHAEL KINSLEY
Los Angeles Times

Michael Kinsley, a former editorial page and opinion editor of the Los Angeles Times, writes a column for Politico. He wrote this for the Times.



source of miracle cures for all sorts of diseases, with Parkinson's foremost among them, is stem-cell research. The church opposes stem-cell research on the grounds that it uses, and in the process destroys, human embryos. These are surplus embryos from fertilization clinics that will be destroyed, or permanently frozen, anyway. They are not fetuses; they are clumps of a few dozen cells.

But of course none of this matters if you believe they are full human beings like you and me. The famous test of that belief goes something like this: Suppose there was a fire destroying your house and you had the choice of rescuing either one real 1-year-old baby or two test tubes containing an embryo each. Would you really go for the test tubes and let the baby die?

It seems more than a little unfair (not characteristic of John Paul II at all) that he should cure this nun but leave the rest of us hanging out to dry. I hope that, in his next miracle, he will do something to rectify this situation. After all, it might be his last one.

What bang do college students get for their buck?

By CLAUDIA DREIFUS and ANDREW HACKER

THE FREE LANCE-STAR (FREDERICKSBURG, VA.)

NEW YORK—As Andrew Hacker and I began researching our book, "Higher Education?" we were struck by how few questions parents raised when considering the quarter-of-a-million-dollar investment that four years at a private college or university could cost them.

This was, probably, the second-most-expensive purchase they'd make in their lifetimes; yet many decisions seemed to be based on the familiarity of the brand name or the attractiveness of a campus.

After three years of researching our book, these are the questions we'd ask, if we had a high-school student at home:

■ Does the college make undergraduate teaching its first priority?

Schools like Harvard and Stanford have almost twice as many graduate students as they do undergraduates, and it's the graduate students that command most of the professor's time and attention.

■ Is the college overrun by administrators?

Yale has 1,050 full-time faculty members and an additional 7,013 people in nonacademic jobs. So ask: Is it primarily a college, or is it a multiversity festooned with extraneous functions?

■ Will professors actually be there?

During a recent year at Williams College, a third of its professors were away on leave. Your daughter may find that her senior thesis supervisor is on sabbatical in Bologna.

■ What's the president's salary?

Increasingly, it's nearing or more than \$1 million. This is a good index of whether a school has chosen a corporate model. Decide whether the person at the top looks and sounds like an educator.

■ Who teaches the freshman class?

It may be a star professor (but the odds are against it). But at most name universities your son will be in the 26th row, with a fledgling graduate student handling the discussion section.

■ Can you walk in for water polo?

At many colleges, athletes are recruited beforehand by coaches, so others find the rosters are filled. At the University of Illinois, only 2 percent of its undergraduates are on teams. The rest have to settle for being spectators.

■ How much emphasis is on athletics?

Small Birmingham-Southern College has a 90-man football squad, supervised by eight paid coaches, while its history department makes do with five professors. Its softball team plays 34 games in a 10-week season, half of them away, leading to missed classes.

■ Does the financial-aid office level with you?

Today, what's called aid is usually a discount on the sticker price or, more likely, a loan. Does the college spell out what the actual interest charges will be, what happens if payments are deferred, and how old your children will be when their debts are finally paid off?

■ Does it resemble a resort?

Five-story climbing walls, gigantic Jacuzzis, food-court chefs specializing in chicken Dijon—all come under what used to be called "room and board." It also diverts funds, and helps explain why so many of your child's classes will be taught by low-cost adjuncts and assistants.

■ Does prestige pay off?

Some parents (even if not you) want their offspring to be successes in life. Hence, they aspire to a college with name recognition. But ask for evidence: Do Dartmouth and Duke degrees really loft you to the top? In our book, we looked at the long-term achievements of one Princeton class. Considering the huge advantage these Ivy Leaguers had at the starting gate, their attainments, for the most part, were not all that remarkable.

In fact, you can get a fine education at a public university; in fact, even better than at many elite schools. Arizona State University, for example, has excellent "honors colleges" on its mega-campus, with small seminars and readily available professors.

But you have to look for such options. Otherwise, you will join

623 fellow freshmen in Biology 101 at Ohio State, or 578 sophomores in Economics 201 at Michigan State, where your exams will be graded by computers and you will squint at your professor from the 29th row.

Nor are public universities as open as they once were. At the University of Colorado, fully a third of its students come from out of state, and are willing to pay \$29,493 for tuition, over three times the in-state tab. At the University of Virginia, preference is given to out-of-staters who pay \$32,902, so many local students must settle for lower-profile branches.

Even so, our public colleges still make a degree possible at a relatively modest cost. You can start a liberal-arts program at Mount Hood Community College (two years' tuition: \$7,688) and then transfer to non-mega Western Oregon University (two years including room and board: \$31,872). Your grand total for a degree will be less than two semesters' tuition at many private schools.

After so many years of researching this American Way of Higher Education, we've come to believe that when parents are selecting a college for Jennifer or Jason, their primary target should be a school that permits their child to graduate debt-free. That means thinking creatively and forgoing dreams of luxury or prestige.

Unless the family is wealthy or the youngster can land a full-tick-et scholarship that genuinely is that, the elite private institutions are probably best avoided.

Instead, parents might consider the honors college at their in-state public university, or the first two years at a community college, many of which are staffed by dedicated professors who like teaching.

Families might also consider a commuter school—\$40,000 to \$100,000 can be saved by taking the subway.

Claudia Dreifus (cdreifus@trinity.com) and Andrew Hacker (Andrewhacker@aol.com) are the co-authors of "Higher Education? How Colleges Are Wasting Our Money and Failing Our Kids—and What We Can Do About It." They wrote this for The Free Lance-Star (Fredericksburg, Va.).

Arizona contains other hatreds, too

The shooting rampage in Tucson, Ariz., occurred against a backdrop of hatred against brown-skinned people that we must address.

At the same time as the Tucson massacre exploded in a shopping mall, a large rock was used to shatter the glass door of the main entrance to the Cesar E. Chavez Building at the University of Arizona.

Less than two years before the assassination attempt on Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, which took the life of 9-year-old Christina Taylor Green (along with five others), another attack in the state also ended the life of a 9-year-old girl. Her name was Brisenia Flores.

Brisenia was killed in May 2009 along with her father, Raul Flores Jr., just 10 miles north of the Mexican border. Her mother was also shot but survived. Arrested in the home invasion, allegedly dressed as law enforcement officials, were three members of the Minutemen American Defense (a so-called border watch group), including its leader, Shawna Forde.

In 2005, a member of the Minuteman Project, armed and standing

guard on the Arizona/Mexico border, stated, "It should be legal to kill illegals. Just shoot 'em on sight. That's my immigration policy recommendation. You break into my country, you die."

"Most of the hate in Arizona is directed at brown peoples, whether indigenous or migrant," says writer and University of Arizona Professor Roberto Rodriguez. "The extreme right wing does not make many distinctions: brown people simply don't belong here."

And let's not forget that it was Arizona's Republican leadership, including Gov. Jan Brewer, that pushed through the anti-immigrant racial profiling law, Senate Bill 1070, and House Bill 2281, curbing ethnic studies.

Arizona is not alone. It is representative of a national trend. Especially on issues such as immigration reform, the divisiveness and fear-mongering and name-calling are at ear-splitting decibels. This noise serves to keep everyone shrouded in fear and to dismiss diverse voices and divergent views.

Yet, we must continue toward civil, intelligent and deeper dialogue so we can try to get at truth, healing and common ground. We

By LUIS J. RODRIGUEZ
The Progressive Media Project

Luis J. Rodriguez is a writer for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive magazine.



can disagree with people, but let's do so with dignity, facts, good research and thought-out arguments, not name-calling and bombast. Let's work together to establish genuine spaces for real solutions and real equity for everyone.






As Professor Rodriguez reminds us, there are "beautiful indigenous principles of what it means to be human—that we are all related, that what each of us does affects all of us, that you are the other me."

Since you are the other me, let's be respectful of ourselves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Mostly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼77°	▲85° ▼77°	▲85° ▼77°	▲85° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲85 ▼79
Palau	Showers	▲86 ▼77
Yap	Showers	▲88 ▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼80
Pohnpei	Mostly Sunny	▲87 ▼76
Kosrae	Showers	▲87 ▼78
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84 ▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲75 ▼66
Beijing	Sunny	▲32 ▼11
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲64 ▼56
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80 ▼68
London	Cloudy	▲46 ▼41
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲74 ▼47
Manila	Thundershowers	▲86 ▼76
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲83 ▼60
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲75 ▼62
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲17 ▼13
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲44 ▼37
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲44 ▼39
Pusan	Sunny	▲39 ▼22
Rome	Sunny	▲51 ▼38
Salem	Cloudy	▲59 ▼41
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲65 ▼48
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲26 ▼11
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲48 ▼34
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲30 ▼25

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
5:25 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet	
11:41 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet	
6:36 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A nearly stationary front extends west-southwestward from 25N172E through a weak circulation centered north of the CNMI or near 22N144E then continues as a shear line to beyond 130E at 14N east of 157E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 100 miles northwest of this boundary west of 157E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are present along and up to 400 miles northwest of the shear line. Remnants of an old shear line stretch westward from 11N153E to end near Koror at 9N130E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are occurring near Koror between 6N and 9N from 130E to 137E. A surface trough south of Chuuk extends southeastward from 6N153E to 2N156E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found between 2N and 7N from 150E to 156E. Trade-wind convergence is producing a band of scattered showers near Kosrae but south of Pohnpei and Majuro within 70 miles of a line from 5N158E to 1N173E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:12 PM
Thursday	6:47 AM	6:12 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:13 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:13 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:30 PM	10:35 AM
Wednesday		11:22 AM
Thursday	12:29 AM	12:10 PM
Friday	1:28 AM	1:02 PM
Saturday	2:26 AM	1:55 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

- CAMPUS BULLETIN
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 16, 2010

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM				GUAM-SAIPAN			
C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily	C09316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
C09313	7:55am	8:45am	3, 6	C09596	6:35am	7:25am	3, 6
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C09596	7:00am	7:50am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	C09604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily	C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:10am	8:45am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:05pm	Daily
DL285	6:40am	9:15am	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	DL286	7:45pm	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
DL297	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily	DL288	8:00pm	12:30am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)				OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily	OZ120	9:50am	2:20am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	OZ607	9:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via KIX	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6	FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
CA988	3:15am	6:55am	1, 5 Dec 13, 17, 20, 24 & 27 only	CA987	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7 Dec 12, 16, 19, 23 & 26 only
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ716/603	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
C09317/891	4:25am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	DL172/286	8:05am	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
DL285/173	6:40am	10:15pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6 via NRT	C0890/9606	10:55am	8:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
C09313/933	7:55am	9:25pm	3 via GUM	OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C09313/893	7:55am	11:00pm	3 via GUM-Palau	OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C09603/933	3:05pm	9:25pm	5 via GUM	PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:25am+1	6 via GUM
C09603/893	3:05pm	11:00pm	5 via GUM-Palau	PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 4, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 ICN	C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7	C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM-Palau
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 7 via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	C0934/9596	11:25pm	7:50am+1	4 via GUM
				C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM
				C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG				HONG KONG-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/909	3:05pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:35pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	C0910/9596	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; CA: Air China
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40	11:50	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
FRE 300	17:50	18:20	Daily				
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
				FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Business

Newest economic indicator: companies buying iPads

NEW YORK (AP)—The news last week that Apple's Steve Jobs is taking a leave of absence was a big story. But something else about the company got far less attention and could be even more important to investors this year.

Corporations "are adding iPads to their approved device list at an amazing rate," Peter Oppenheimer, Apple Inc.'s chief financial officer, told analysts

Tuesday. Apple's products, more known for their consumer appeal, are now used in by employees of Wells Fargo, Archer Daniels Midland, DuPont and others.

Splurging on \$500 iPads is a sign that the business cycle is starting to turn and that companies are starting to spend a record amount of cash they've accumulated. If the trend is real, companies will do what consum-

ers haven't—spark a strong economic recovery. That could push the Standard & Poor's 500 index to its third straight year of double-digit percentage gains. The last time that happened: the tech-boom days of the late 1990s.

"You're going to see a bigger commitment to growth this year because companies have underspent for quite some time," says Bill Stone, chief investment strat-

egist at PNC Asset Management.

Financial, technology and energy companies are the most likely to benefit from business spending, says David Bianco, a market strategist at Bank of America. Each group is up about 3 percent this year, nearly one percentage point ahead of the overall S&P 500. Those three groups account for nearly half of index's value.

The continued success of financial, energy and technology stocks would point to a new stage of this bull market, which has returned nearly 100 percent since it began in March

2009. Consumer discretionary stocks, the group of hotels, retail stores and automakers that depend on consumer spending, outperformed the last two years after being left for dead during the 2008 financial crisis. Those companies are now lagging the market, suggesting that the bounce back from the lows of the recession is over.

"Consumers don't have the income growth to sustain a more rapid pace of spending," says Jeffrey Kleintop, a market strategist at LPL Financial. Instead, he says, businesses spending will eventually lead to

a pickup in the jobs market.

Corporate spending on technology helped IBM Corp. beat analyst expectations last week. On Tuesday, IBM said that its 7 percent jump in revenue came in part from companies in the U.S. upgrading their computer systems. Its stock jumped almost 4 percent last week.

Energy companies, meanwhile, are leading the market this year with a 3.4 percent jump because of higher demand, a sign of an improving economy. Oil company Schlumberger said Friday profit in the most recent quarter rose 31 percent.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Tea partiers say defense in mix for budget cuts

WASHINGTON (AP)—Back home, tea partiers clamoring for the debt-ridden government to slash spending say nothing should be off limits. Tea party-backed lawmakers echo that argument, and they're not exempting the military's multibillion-dollar budget in a time of war. That demand is creating hard choices for the newest members of Congress, especially Republicans who owe their elections and solid House majority to the influential grass-roots movement. Cutting defense and canceling weapons could mean deep spending reductions and high marks from tea partiers as the nation wrestles with a \$1.3 trillion deficit. Yet it also could jeopardize thousands of jobs when unemployment is running high. Proponents of the cuts could face criticism that they're trying to weaken national security in a post-Sept. 11 world.

Asian shares open the week in mixed mood

TOKYO (AP)—Asian shares were mixed Monday, with Japan's key index snapping a two-day losing streak as investors hunted for bargains. The Nikkei 225 stock market added

0.4 percent to 10,313.46. Honda Motor Co. led the country's top three automakers higher after a ratings upgrade from Nomura Securities Co. The issue jumped 3.2 percent, while rival Toyota Motor Co. added 1.2 percent. Elsewhere, Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.2 percent to 4,767.00 and the Shanghai Composite index was up 0.1 percent at 2,716.89. Benchmarks in Singapore and New Zealand also gained ground.

It's lights out for the incandescent bulb in Calif.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The brightest bulb in most homes for more than a century is fading toward darkness this year as California turns out the light on the century-old incandescent. Beginning Jan. 1, the state began phasing out certain energy-sucking bulbs, federal standards the rest of the country will enact next year. Manufacturers will no longer make the traditional 100-watt bulb and stores will eventually sell out of current supplies. Consumers will have to choose from more efficient bulbs that use no more than 72 watts, including halogen incandescents, compact fluorescents and light-emitting diode, or LED, bulbs.



In this Nov. 26, 2010 file photo, a store employee holds up an iPad at an Apple Store in San Francisco. AP

Payroll deductions

Question: I'm a cashier in a grocery store. Occasionally, there is a discrepancy between the tape record of money received and the actual cash at the end of my shift. Whenever the difference is a shortage—less cash than what was recorded—the difference is deducted from my pay. Can my employer do this? Is this legal?

I have received numerous questions on the issue of payroll deductions recently, both from employees and management staff. Some have been, like this question, regarding cashing discrepancies, and others have been regarding lost or damaged property. The answer to both questions in the CNMI is "It depends—but usually not!!!" Generally, deductions, with some exceptions, cannot be made that will drop the employee's salary below minimum wage, and also cannot be made if the deduction diminishes the calculation or payment of overtime. Allowable deductions must be made within the limits and guidance provided by the Fair Labor Standards Act, FLSA. If an employee is being paid minimum wage, then cash shortages, uniform costs, damaged equipment and similar deductions cannot be made.

Employers should be knowledgeable about which deductions can be made and to what extent. In this article I will only discuss deductions from non-exempt employees. The limits on deductions apply not only to cashiers but to all non-exempt employees that are covered by the FLSA.

First, the following items *can be calculated as part of the employee's wages or can be deducted* even if the payroll amount drops below minimum wage:

- Board, lodging or facilities furnished by the employer for an employee's benefit.
- Meals furnished to an employee, at cost, on a volunteer basis (the employee chooses to eat the meal).
- General merchandise furnished at company stores and commissaries.
- Fuel, electricity, water and gas furnished by the employer for an employee's personal use.

However, if any of the above items are furnished for the benefit

or convenience of the employer, they *may not be credited against an employee's wages or cause the wages to fall below minimum wage*, if deducted.

Of course the employer *can also deduct* such items as taxes assessed against the employee (income tax, Social Security, Medicaid), voluntary wage assignments, loans or payroll advances, employee contributions to insurance and retirement plans, and union dues under a valid collective bargaining agreement.

The following deductions, however, *cannot be made if they cause the wages to drop below the minimum wages due* for the seven-day pay period:

- Kickbacks to the employer or repayment of recruitment fees.
 - Cash shortages (if the loss results from employee theft or misappropriation, pay at least the minimum wage and charge the employee with the crime for a court-ordered repayment).
 - Tools or equipment if lost or damaged, even by employee negligence.
 - Workers' compensation insurance.
- Some examples of common problem deductions are provided in the US Department of Labor's Fact Sheet #16: Deductions from Wages for Uniforms and Other Facilities under the Fair Labor Standards Act:
- A *minimum wage* employee working as a cashier is illegally required to reimburse the employer for a cash drawer shortage.
 - An employer improperly requires tipped employees to pay for customers who walk out without paying their bills or for incorrectly totaled bills.
 - An employer furnishes elaborate uniforms to employees and makes them responsible for having the uniforms cleaned.
 - An employee driving the employer's vehicle causes a wreck, and the employer holds the employee responsible for the repairs.
 - A security guard is required to purchase a gun (or other equipment) for the job.
 - An employee is charged for an employer-required physical.
 - Such deductions are illegal if they bring the employee's salary below minimum wage or cut into overtime compensation. Further, employers may not avoid FLSA *minimum wage* and over-

HR MATTERS

By FRANK GIBSON

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Frank L. Gibson, SPHR, GPHR, owner of HR Support, CNMI, a Saipan-based training and consulting firm, has been a resident of the CNMI for more than 15 years. One of the founding members of the CNMI Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management, he has worked both as a line-manager of human resources and in the Human Resource Office.

time requirements by having the employee reimburse them in cash for the cost of such items in lieu of deducting the cost from the employee's wages.

For example, if an employee is subject to and is paid the statutory CNMI *minimum wage* of \$5.05 per hour, the employer may not make any deduction from the employee's wages for cashing losses, the cost of uniforms, lost or damaged equipment, etc. However, if the employee is paid \$5.55 per hour and works 45 hours in the workweek, the overtime of 5 hours at \$5.55 x 1.5 (\$41.63) must be paid and then the maximum amount the employer could legally deduct from the employee's wages would be \$20 (\$5.00 X 40 hours). Deductions made during overtime workweeks must be with the agreement or understanding of the employee.

Both employees and employers should be aware of their rights and obligations regarding payroll deductions. For more information, you can visit the Wage and Hour Division website at www.wagehour.dol.gov.

The information contained in this column is intended as general information only. Readers should obtain professional advice before taking action with respect to their individual situations. Readers may submit questions regarding human resource issues to hrsupportcnmi@gmail.com or editor@saipantribune.com.

Nation

Walmart shooting leaves 2 dead, 2 deputies hurt

PORT ORCHARD, Wash. (AP)—A shootout in front of a Walmart in Washington state left two people dead and two sheriff's deputies wounded Sunday afternoon, a sheriff's spokesman said.

One of the dead was a man who shot at deputies, said Scott Wilson of the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office. The other victim was a young woman who died after she was taken to a Tacoma hospital, he said.

Sheriff's officials said the deputies' wounds weren't expected to be life threatening.

Wilson said details were sketchy, but the sheriff's office received a call about a suspicious person at the store in Port Orchard. He said the man ran and started shooting when three deputies tried to talk to him.

The deputies, including the two who were wounded, returned fire, and the man died of his wounds in the parking lot, Wilson said.



A woman is comforted outside of Walmart in Port Orchard, Wash. where a Washington state sheriff said a shooting left one person dead and two sheriff's deputies wounded Sunday afternoon, Jan. 23, 2011.

Witness Ray Bourge told KOMO-TV that he saw a man running through the parking lot toward nearby woods, firing his gun back toward the store.

"Right behind him there was an officer chasing him, and he began to open fire," Bourge said.

Bourge said the officer was about 30

to 40 feet behind the suspect when he started firing.

"Five or six shots were fired. ... I just went and took cover," he said.

Witness Victor Meyers told KOMO-TV that he heard the first shot, then six more in rapid succession.

"I heard one shot, which I thought was a car backfiring, and then several more reported back, which I knew to be gunfire," Meyers said.

He said he saw a female deputy running toward a victim on the ground before he and other witnesses were hustled from the scene.

The store was immediately locked down, and customers weren't being allowed to leave.

"No one is allowed in or out until further notice by police," customer Mike Lambert told KIRO-TV by phone from inside the store.

Wilson said no other suspects were involved in the incident, which began at about 3:45 p.m. He didn't know whether the woman and the man who were killed knew each other.

Port Orchard is about 15 miles west of Seattle across Puget Sound.

Republicans press for Senate vote on health care

WASHINGTON (AP)—Senate Republicans want to box majority Democrats into allowing a health care repeal vote even if GOP lawmakers expect to be on the losing side.

"We need to have a vote on it because we promised the people we would," Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said Sunday on "Face the Nation" on CBS. "We have to have a vote on repeal so that everybody is on record whether they want to repeal."

Republicans took control of the House after November's elections and last week voted, as promised, to repeal the health care law. Only three Democrats joined all Republicans in the 245-189 vote to scrap the law.

In the Senate, Democrats retained majority control, even though the 53-47 split is narrower than the advantage they held before November. Two of

those votes come from independents who caucus with the Democrats and support the health care law overall. Moreover, Senate measures usually require a 60-vote majority to advance.

While Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., who controls the Senate agenda, has said such a bill won't come to a vote, Republican leader Mitch McConnell repeated his promise that a repeal vote will indeed take place.

"I'm not going to discuss how we'll do it from a parliamentary point of view here," McConnell said on "Fox News Sunday."

"If that does not pass, and I don't think anyone is optimistic that it will, we intend to go after this health care bill in every way that we can. It's the single worst piece of legislation that's been passed in my time in the Senate," McConnell said.

One route to a repeal vote could be through an amendment brought to the Senate floor, according to Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois, the No. 2 Democrat.

"If some Republican senator wants to offer it as an amendment at some point, it's possible they will. It's possible we'll face that vote," Durbin said on Fox. "But having spoken to my members in the Democratic caucus, with Sen. Reid, we feel there's still strong support for health care reform."

With its mandate that almost all people in the U.S. carry insurance, the health care law divides people about evenly. Some provisions—coverage for those with pre-existing conditions and allowing older children to remain on parents' insurance—are popular.

Only about one in four people say they want to do away with the health care law completely, according to a re-

cent Associated Press-GfK poll.

For those reasons, Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., suggested that Republicans should be careful what they wish for.

"If the Republicans offer an amendment on the floor, then we will require them to vote on the individual protections in the bill that are very popular and that even some of the new Republican House members have said they support," Schumer said on CBS. "So, in the end, their repeal bill is going to be so full of holes it looks like Swiss cheese."

The likelihood of defeat for a repeal bill—Obama could veto it even if it were to pass Congress—has led Republicans lawmakers to vow to dismantle the law piece by piece and to deny it the money necessary to carry out its provisions.

House leader Cantor believes Obama is a US citizen

WASHINGTON (AP)—The new Republican House majority leader says he doesn't think questions about President Barack Obama's citizenship should play a role in the discussion of policy matters.

Two years into the Obama administration, so-called birthers continue to argue that Obama isn't a natural-born citizen and that he hasn't proved he's constitutionally qualified to be president. Birth records in Hawaii haven't dissuaded them.

House Majority Leader Eric Cantor says he believes Obama is a citizen and that most Americans are beyond that question.

"I don't think it's an issue that we need to address at all. It is not an issue that even needs to be on the policy-making table right now whatsoever," he said.

Appearing Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press," Cantor refused to call people who question Obama's citizenship "crazy."

"I don't think it's nice to call anyone crazy," Cantor said.

Cantor says he believes that Obama wants what's best for the country and that there are honest disagreements



In this photo provided by NBC television Rep. Eric Cantor, R-Va., speaks on NBC's "Meet the Press" in Washington Sunday, Jan. 23, 2011.

over how to achieve that.

Birthers say there's no proof he was born in the United States; many of these skeptics question whether he was actually born in Kenya, his father's home country.

Hawaii's health director said in 2008 and 2009 that she had seen and verified Obama's original vital records, and birth notices in two Honolulu newspapers were published within days of Obama's birth at Kapiolani

Maternity and Gynecological Hospital in Honolulu.

Health Department spokeswoman Janice Okubo again confirmed on Friday that Obama's name is found in its alphabetical list of names of people born in Hawaii, maintained in bound copies available for public view.

Hawaii's Democratic governor, Neil Abercrombie, who was a friend of Obama's parents and knew him as a child, began an effort last month to find a way to dispel conspiracy theories that the president was born elsewhere. The governor said he was bothered by people who questioned Obama's birthplace for political reasons.

But Abercrombie's office said Friday that he was ending his quest because it's against state law to release private documents. The state's attorney general told the governor he can't disclose an individual's birth documentation without a person's consent.

The Obama campaign issued a certificate of live birth in 2008, an official document from the state showing the president's birth date, city and name, along with his parents' names and races.

ACROSS THE NATION

Gunman shoots 4 officers inside Detroit precinct

DETROIT (AP)—A gunman opened fire inside a Detroit police precinct on Sunday, wounding four officers including a commander before he was shot and killed by police, authorities said. The gunman walked in through the precinct's revolving door shortly after 4 p.m. and opened fire indiscriminately at officers, police said. The officers fired back, killing the gunman. "Utter chaos and pandemonium took place," Police Chief Ralph Godbee said at a news conference. "We have a number of officers who are shaken up."

FBI: Woman who raised stolen NY baby held in Conn.

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—A North Carolina woman who raised a child kidnapped 23 years ago from a New York hospital surrendered to authorities on a probation violation charge Sunday, days after a widely publicized reunion between the biological mother and the daughter taken from her as a baby. Ann Pettway surrendered Sunday morning to the FBI and Bridgeport police on a warrant from North Carolina, where she's on probation because of a conviction for attempted embezzlement, FBI supervisory special agent William Reiner said.

SC inmate in trouble after Facebooking from prison

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP)—South Carolina prison officials say they have seized a cell phone from an inmate who was updating his Facebook page from prison. Corrections officials told The Post and Courier of Charleston that 22-year-old Quincy Howard is in disciplinary detention and can't make collect calls or have visitors after the contraband mobile phone was taken from his cell earlier this month. Howard is serving a 30-year sentence for manslaughter from Marion County.

Nation

Missing boat with 5 Americans lands in PH

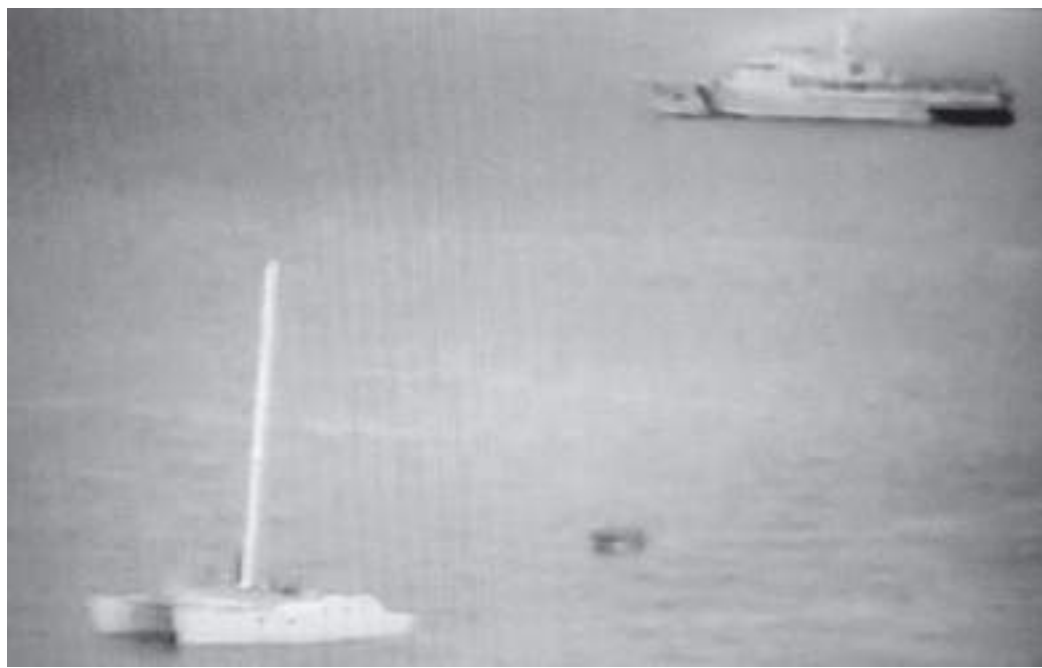
MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Five Americans stepped ashore in good health Monday in the central Philippines following an international search for their sailboat when it failed to arrive on time in its voyage from the Pacific island of Guam, officials said.

The vessel, called the *Pineapple*, ran into bad weather after departing from Guam on Jan. 6 and relatives of the crew—four men and a woman—reported them missing Jan. 18.

A Philippine coast guard ship reached the 38-foot (11-meter) catamaran on Sunday after it was spotted by plane the previous day. Rescuers escorted the vessel to the port of Maasin on Leyte Island, where the crew refueled, got their passports stamped and treated themselves to a meal, the coast guard said.

“They’re all in fine health,” coast guard chief Adm. Wilfredo Tamayo said of the crew, including a Filipino-American in the U.S. Air Force. The U.S. Embassy in Manila has declined to release their identities and hometowns.

The U.S. Coast Guard, which said it had spent 63 hours searching for the sailboat, expressed



In this image made from video and released by the Philippine coast guard, American occupants on board the 38-foot (11-meter) catamaran *The Pineapple*, left, wait to be rescued by a rubber boat, center, from a Philippine coast guard vessel, upper right, off the southern island of Dinagat, Philippines, on Sunday, Jan. 23, 2011.

relief that the boat was found but faulted the crew for failing to take proper precautions. The vessel did not carry long-distance communication or emergency distress equipment and did not file a comprehensive float plan, the agency said.

“I’m elated for the family

and friends of the *Pineapple*, but compelled to point out that this voyage was made without taking basic, commonsense precautions,” said Capt. Thom-

as Sparks, U.S. Coast Guard Guam commander.

A Philippine coast guard plane spotted the sailboat Saturday off the southern island

of Dinagat, but was not able to confirm its identity until Sunday when the weather cleared, Tamayo said.

A woman aboard the boat was able to contact her husband by cell phone at 1:30 p.m. Sunday—apparently once she came within range of cell phone service—and he called rescuers in Guam to give them the boat’s coordinates, the U.S. Coast Guard said in a statement.

“The husband confirmed the vessel ran into bad weather and suffered a rudder and radio casualty. This delayed the *Pineapple*’s voyage but it was never in danger of sinking,” the statement said.

Guam, a U.S. territory, is about 1,400 miles (2,290 kilometers) east of Cebu, where heavy rains and rough seas have been reported in recent weeks.

The U.S. Coast Guard had deployed a HC-130 Hercules aircraft, two Navy P-3 Orion planes, two Air Force C-12s and a patrol ship to search an area of 122,600 square nautical miles (317,530 square

kilometers) for more than 63 hours, the agency said.

U.S. authorities were informed of the discovery by Philippine authorities and have been in touch with Philippine officials to provide help to the Americans, U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Rebecca Thompson said.

A video taken from a search plane showed four of the Americans on top of the white-hulled catamaran, one apparently waving, as a rubber boat with coast guard personnel approached.

Many Philippine provinces, particularly in the east, have experienced rough seas amid unusually heavy rains since late December. At least 71 people have died and 23 others remain missing from the stormy weather.

The Philippine coast guard rescued 260 of 277 people aboard nearly a dozen boats that sank, overturned or ran into trouble last week due to the inclement weather. Fifteen remain missing while two drowned, the officials said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Bus slams into oil tanker in Pakistan, 32 killed

NOORIABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A bus slammed into an oil tanker in southern Pakistan before dawn Sunday, setting off a blazing inferno that gutted both vehicles and killed 32 people, police said. The accident reportedly occurred because the bus driver fell asleep and lost control of his vehicle, said Mohammad Farooq, local police chief in Jamshoro district where the accident took place. Passengers had twice asked the driver to stop the vehicle and rest to avoid an accident, he said. The 32 dead included women and children, whose charred bodies were carried in white sheets to waiting ambulances, said Farooq. Nine people were also injured in the accident, which took place near the town of Nooriabad, he said.

Pair of US drone strikes kill 6 in Pakistan

MIR ALI, Pakistan (AP)—A pair of suspected U.S. drone strikes killed six alleged militants in Pakistan’s troubled North Waziristan tribal area near the Afghan border Sunday, Pakistani intelligence officials said. The attacks came as more than 2,000 tribesmen, many of them students, held a protest in one of North Waziristan’s largest towns demanding an end to the drone strikes, saying they

killed innocent civilians. Militants have effective control over North Waziristan, and it was unclear if they played a role in organizing the protest. The U.S. refuses to acknowledge the covert CIA drone strikes publicly, but officials insist privately that the attacks are precise and mainly kill Taliban and al-Qaida militants. However, there have been credible accounts of civilian casualties.

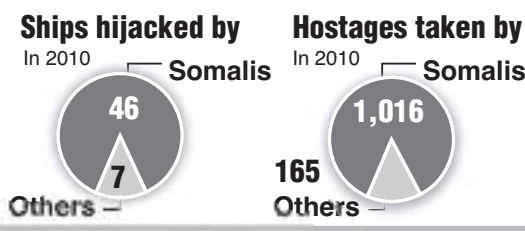
Family suspected of electrocuting Pakistani bride

MULTAN, Pakistan (AP)—Police say relatives of a young Pakistani woman are suspected of electrocuting her for marrying a man against their wishes. Police official Afzal Lodhi says authorities arrested 21-year-old Saima Bibi’s father and three of her uncles Sunday in a small village in eastern Pakistan. He says police a day earlier recovered Bibi’s body, which had burn marks indicating she had been electrocuted. Lodhi says the woman eloped with another villager a month ago and got married in the southern port city of Karachi. He says the woman’s relatives lured her back by falsely promising they would agree to her marriage. Lodhi says the woman’s father denies relatives killed her and claims she took poison because she did not want to marry the man proposed by her family.

Stemming piracy

South Korean special forces raided a hijacker freighter in the Arabian Sea, saving the crew from Somali pirates, who were responsible for 92 percent of all ship hijackings last year.

Piracy-prone areas, 2010



Pirate-fighting tactics may change after raids

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Two daring commando raids by two nations in one day against Somali pirates show that some naval forces are taking a harder line, perhaps because nothing else they’ve tried has stopped the rise of lawlessness off the east coast of Africa.

The raids by South Korea and Malaysia on Friday could be a sign of more aggressive tactics to come—both by navies and by pirates responding to them. Experts say pirates could increasingly use hostages as human shields by pirates if raids become more common.

The European Union’s naval force refuses to raid hijacked ships out of concern for the safety of hostages, but frustration is rising. Despite patrols by an international flotilla of

modern warships, drones patrolling the Indian Ocean off the east African coast and Arabian Gulf and diverse strategies employed including the sinking of pirate boats, Somali pirates have been relentless.

They captured a record 1,016 hostages in 2010 and currently hold 32 vessels and 746 crew members of various nationalities after hijacking another six ships so far this year, according to a recent report by the International Maritime Bureau.

Eight crew members died and 13 were wounded in Somali pirate incidents in 2010, up from four dead and 10 wounded in 2009. There were no pirate killings elsewhere in the world in 2010.

The bureau said Somali pirates are operating more broad-

ly than ever, from Oman on the Arabian Peninsula to Mozambique, more than 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers) away in southeastern Africa. It also said navies have been more reluctant to intervene because pirates are using hijacked vessels to catch new prey.

Somalia’s long lawless coastline snakes around the Horn of Africa and provides the perfect base for pirate dens. The country has not had a functioning government since a socialist dictatorship collapsed in 1991, plunging the nation into clan-based civil war.

South Korean commandos raided a cargo ship in the Arabian Sea before dawn Friday, killing eight Somali pirates and capturing five as they rescued all 21 crew members. The only

crew member injured was the captain, who was shot in the stomach by a pirate; South Korea’s military said his condition was not life-threatening.

A 4 1/2-minute video released Sunday by South Korea’s military shows commandos in a small boat readying to climb onto the freighter amid gunshots. Later the commandos are seen trying to enter a door and then bringing out some hostages, with a navy helicopter shining searchlights on the vessel.

The video also shows several captured Somali pirates kneeling on the ship as South Korean soldiers carrying rifles stand nearby. The video, taken by a nearby South Korean destroyer, shows the 1,500-ton chemical carrier *Samho Jewelry* pockmarked with bullet holes.

World

Israeli inquiry: Flotilla raid, blockade legal

JERUSALEM (AP)—An Israeli panel on Sunday cleared the military and government of any wrongdoing during last year's deadly raid on a Gaza-bound international flotilla, but the finding appeared unlikely to repair damage to Israel's standing.

Nine pro-Palestinian activists, eight Turkish citizens and a Turkish American, were killed as Israeli commandos boarded one of the ships in the flotilla, the Mavi Marmara, last May 31. The report said the armed defense of Israel's maritime blockade of the Hamas-ruled coastal strip was justified under international law.

A wave of international condemnation of the raid forced Israel to ease the blockade.

The incident damaged relations with Turkey and led the U.N. chief to order an international investigation. Turkey swiftly condemned Sunday's report, saying it was "surprised, appalled and dismayed."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the inquiry.

"I hope all those who rushed to judgment against Israel and its soldiers will read this report and learn the truth about what happened," Netanyahu said. "The truth is that our soldiers were defending our country—and defending their very lives."

The nearly 300-page report echoed an earlier military investigation that faulted the planning and execution of the operation. Even so, it said the blockade of Gaza and the raid were legal and justified.

"The actions carried out by Israel on May 31, 2010, to enforce the naval blockade had the regrettable consequences of the loss of human life and physical injuries," read the report. Nonetheless, "the actions taken were found to be legal pursuant to the rules of international law."

The flotilla aimed to bring attention to the blockade of Gaza, which Israel imposed after Hamas militants captured an Israeli soldier in 2006 and tightened after Hamas seized control of the territory the following year.

Israel said the blockade was needed to prevent Hamas, an armed group that has fired thousands of rockets at Israel,



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivers a statement about Turkel commission, an inquiry set up by the Israeli Government to investigate the Gaza flotilla raid during an International Holocaust Remembrance Day event, in his office in Jerusalem, Sunday Jan. 23, 2011.

Leaked documents show Palestinian Jerusalem offer

JERUSALEM (AP)—Palestinians were prepared to compromise over two of the toughest issues, Jerusalem and refugees, during peace talks in 2008, the Al-Jazeera TV channel reported Sunday, quoting from documents it said came from the talks.

Palestinian negotiators quickly denied the reports, saying parts of the documents were fabricated. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said he has kept Arab countries fully briefed on the negotiations with Israel.

Al-Jazeera said the Palestinians offered to let Israel keep all but one of the Jewish enclaves it build in east Jerusalem after capturing it in the 1967

Mideast war. About 200,000 Israelis live there now.

In return, according to the quoted documents, the Palestinians wanted Israeli land, including a section close to the West Bank-Israel line where many of Israel's minority Arab citizens live.

Also, they proposed international control of the key Jerusalem holy site as a temporary measure. The Palestinians, Israel, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan would administer the site where the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound sits atop the ruins of the biblical Jewish temples, until Israel and the Palestinians could work out a permanent arrangement.

On the issue of refugees, the docu-

ments said the Palestinians agreed that Israel would take in 10,000 refugees a year for 10 years—a total of 100,000. The Palestinians have insisted that all refugees from the 1948-49 war and their descendants—several million people—have the right to return to Israel. The Israelis have always rejected that as a threat to the Jewish character of their state.

The chief Palestinian negotiator in the 2008 talks, Ahmed Qureia, told The Associated Press that "many parts of the documents were fabricated, as part of the incitement against the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian leadership."

from building up its arsenal. Critics have noted the blockade did little to weaken Hamas or halt weapons smuggling, while causing widespread economic hardship and shortages of foods and other basic items.

Israeli forces were sent to commandeer the ships before dawn after the flotilla ignored radio warnings to turn back and refused an offer to dock at an Israeli port and transfer humanitarian aid into Gaza overland. One of the ships radioed to the Israelis to "go back to Auschwitz," according to a military recording cited in the report.

Five small ships were commandeered without incident, but soldiers rappelling from helicopters onto the deck of the Marmara, with some 600 passengers on board, were attacked by several dozen activists armed with bars, slingshots and knives as they landed on deck one by one, according to video footage released by the military.

The Israelis, caught off guard, were beaten, and some were thrown onto a lower deck. According to Sunday's report, two soldiers were shot, apparently with weapons wrested from the Israelis.

Both soldiers and activists have said they acted in self-defense.

The flotilla was organized by an Islamic aid group from Turkey known by the acronym IHH. Israel banned IHH, which has ties to Turkey's Islamic-oriented government, in 2008 because of alleged ties to Hamas.

Turkey, formerly one of Israel's closest allies, recalled its ambassador to Israel after the incident, and ties between the former allies have not recovered.

An official Turkish commission investigating the incident condemned the Israeli findings Sunday, saying the blockade amounted to illegal "collective punishment" of Gaza's 1.5 million people. It also accused Israel of using unnecessary and excessive force.

"Our commission is surprised, appalled and dismayed that the national inquiry process in Israel has resulted in the exoneration of the Israeli armed forces," it said.

Tunisian police crack down on ex Ben Ali allies

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP)—Police in Tunisia cracked down Sunday on key allies of the ousted president, placing two high-ranking officials under house arrest and detaining the head of a well-known private TV station for allegedly trying to slow down the country's nascent steps toward democracy.

The measures against former cronies and supporters of deposed President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali came amid continued street protests in the North African country's capital, Tunis, and efforts by the tenuous interim government to heed the incessant groundswell of opposition to his old guard.

Hundreds of protesters—many from Tunisia's provinces south of the capital—rallied in Tunis to press on with demands that holdovers of Ben Ali's repressive 23-year regime be kept out of power.

Tunisia's "Jasmine Revolution" drove the iron-fisted Ben Ali to flee to Saudi Arabia on Jan. 14, and sparked similar protests and civil disobedience across the Middle East and North Afri-

ca. Many observers were looking to see if Tunisians can complete their fervent push for democracy.

State news agency TAP reported that Larbi Nasri, the president of privately owned Hannibal TV, was arrested along with his son on charges of "high treason" and plotting against state security.

The station, which has become one of Tunisia's most popular channels mainly for its sports coverage and lively talk shows, almost immediately stopped its broadcasts.

Nasri, who has family ties to Ben Ali's widely despised wife, Leila Trabelsi, is accused of using his channel to "cause the revolution of the young to fail, sow chaos, incite disobedience and broadcast information" aimed to hoodwink the public, TAP said. The ultimate aim, its report said, was "to restore the dictatorship of the former president."

TAP also reported that former Ben Ali advisers Abdallah Kallel and Abdelaziz Ben Dhia have been placed under house arrest, and police are looking for a third man, Abdelwaheb Abdallah.

WORLD BRIEFS

Hundreds protest arrest of Yemeni woman activist

SANAA, Yemen (AP)—Yemeni police have arrested a woman activist for leading anti-government protests, setting off a second day of street demonstrations. Police used tear gas and batons to disperse hundreds of students, activists and lawmakers who demonstrated in the capital Sanaa to demand the release of Tawakul Abdel-Salam Karman, who was arrested early Sunday. Interior Minister Muthar al-Masari said on state television Sunday that people have the right to express their views but demonstrations, gatherings and marches should be staged within the boundaries of the law. Karman is a senior member of the opposition Islamic fundamentalist Islah Party.

Chavez supporters, foes stage anniversary rallies

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Allies and adversaries of President Hugo Chavez took to the streets of the capi-

tal by the thousands Sunday, staging rival demonstrations to commemorate the 53rd anniversary of Venezuela's democracy. Opposition supporters gathered along an avenue in eastern Caracas and chanted anti-government slogans while waving red-yellow-and-blue Venezuelan flags and banners labeling Chavez a despot. Many of the president's critics expressed concerns that Chavez is amassing power and cracking down on dissent.

Portugal picks conservative president, shuns gov't

LISBON, Portugal (AP)—Portugal elected its conservative president to a second term Sunday, delivering a harsh political setback to the minority Socialist government which is struggling to contain an acute economic crisis. Anibal Cavaco Silva, who is supported by the main opposition Social Democratic Party, collected 53 percent of the vote compared with 20 percent for second-placed Socialist

Party candidate Manuel Alegre, official figures showed with 98 percent of districts returning. Four other candidates picked up the remaining votes. The government has enacted deeply unpopular austerity measures amid fears that the financial crisis spells economic disaster for Portugal.

UN points to Iraq violence in chiding deportations

BAGHDAD (AP)—The head of the U.N. refugee agency scolded nations Sunday for deporting Iraqis back into danger, delivering his criticism on a day when insurgents rattled the Baghdad area with a series of bombings that killed 10 people. Antonio Guterres, the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, said an estimated 2,000 Iraqis have been fleeing their homeland every month, including a "significant number of Christians." But some countries have turned back dozens of refugees—forcing many to return to some of Iraq's most violent regions.

Focus

By **KIM GAMEL**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD (AP)—The U.S. soldier was out of uniform when he sneaked off base on a motorcycle to visit his Iraqi wife in central Baghdad. The militiamen hiding nearby weren't fooled. They were seen seizing him at gunpoint.

More than four years later, Ahmed Kousay al-Taie, a resident of Ann Arbor, Michigan who was born in Iraq, is the only American service member still missing here. His family fears he will never be found.

At the twilight of the U.S. military presence in Iraq, a unit is dedicated to searching for al-Taie and 12 missing civilians, including seven Americans. Its mission is a key piece of unfinished business for the U.S. as it prepares to withdraw its remaining troops from Iraq by the end of this year.

Kidnappings for ransom or political motives, mostly of

claimed was al-Taie but he demanded solid evidence that al-Taie, who was 41 at the time, was alive and well, the military said in an e-mail.

Al-Taie's uncle, Entifadh Qanbar, a spokesman for a controversial Iraqi politician, denied that any ransom demand had been made but described for the AP a web of negotiations with a number of intermediaries as he continued to pursue leads through the years. The missing soldier was last seen four months after his abduction, in a video posted on the Internet by a Shiite militant faction called Ahl al-Bayt Brigades.

Search goes on for missing Americans in Iraq

Iraqis but also many foreigners, were common as the insurgency gained steam after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. The February 2006 bombing of a Shiite mosque by Sunni insurgents caused retaliatory bloodshed to spiral. Death squads roamed the streets.

Many cases have been resolved as security has improved. Tips are now far more forthcoming, and U.S. and Iraqi troops have access to former no-go zones. But the fate of al-Taie and others who vanished remains unknown.

Al-Taie, an Army interpreter, was kidnapped on Oct. 23, 2006. About a week later, a family member received a ransom demand, the U.S. military told The Associated Press.

The relative then met with members of the group behind the kidnapping. They showed him a grainy video on a handheld device of a man they

Al-Taie had grown up in Iraq but fled the country with his family when he was a teenager. They eventually settled in the Michigan college town of Ann Arbor. He dreamed of becoming a pilot and wasn't good at school. The ouster of Saddam Hussein gave him new focus.

"Everybody loved Ahmed. He had a smooth and cheerful personality," Qanbar said. "He had lots of job offers. He had such a bright future ahead of him."

His mother, Nawal al-Taie, said her son, like many Iraqi exiles, was eager to help rebuild his homeland after the invasion. He met his wife during a trip to Iraq shortly after Saddam fell. At the time, he was still a civilian. His wife now lives in Michigan but declined to be interviewed because she fears for her family back home.

In December 2004, al-Taie joined an Army reserve program

for native speakers of Arabic and other strategic languages. He was deployed to Iraq in November 2005 and was assigned to a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Baghdad until he was kidnapped the following year.

His in-laws say he often met secretly with his wife at her family's home despite warnings that he was in danger of being attacked by the Mahdi Army, a Shiite militia loyal to anti-U.S. cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

It was during one of those visits that al-Taie disappeared. Masked gunmen hiding in an abandoned Saddam-era army building seized him as he went to find his wife at her uncle's house, less than two blocks away in the mainly Shiite neighborhood of Karradah.

"A neighbor saw the gunmen and went to my family and informed them. My parents, brothers and sisters all came at once and pleaded with them to let him go," recalled al-Taie's sister-in-law, Shaimaa Abdul-Sattar, who witnessed the abduction.

Al-Taie remained calm as he was led into a waiting car and whisked away.

"He just kept saying 'I have trust in the Mahdi Army,'" Shaimaa said during an interview in the shabby two-room apartment she shares with about a dozen relatives in Baghdad.

As an American soldier and a Sunni Muslim, al-Taie faced a double risk when he left the protection of his base inside the Green Zone, a well-guarded area that houses the U.S. Embassy, Iraqi government offices and the parliament.

American commanders im-



In this Oct. 30, 2006 file photo, an undated picture released by the al-Taie family, shows Ahmed Kousay al-Taie, a U.S. Army reservist kidnapped in Baghdad, and his wife Israa Abdul-Sattar.

mediately launched a massive manhunt, locking down Karradah and the Mahdi Army stronghold of Sadr City.

Within days, the military arrested four of the kidnapers. But by then, al-Taie had already been handed off to another group and transported to the Shiite heartland of southern Iraq, according to people familiar with the case.

During a telephone interview from her home in Ann Arbor, Al-Taie's mother, Nawal, wept but said she hasn't given up hope.

"When my son joined the Army, I was happy because he was helping the military and helping the Iraqi people, too," she said. "I always, always remember him day and night ... and I'm waiting for him to come home."

In the meantime, the military promoted al-Taie in absentia from specialist to staff sergeant. He became the only military service member still missing in

Iraq after the 2009 discovery of the remains of Navy pilot Scott Speicher, who was shot down 18 years earlier, on the first night of the Gulf War.

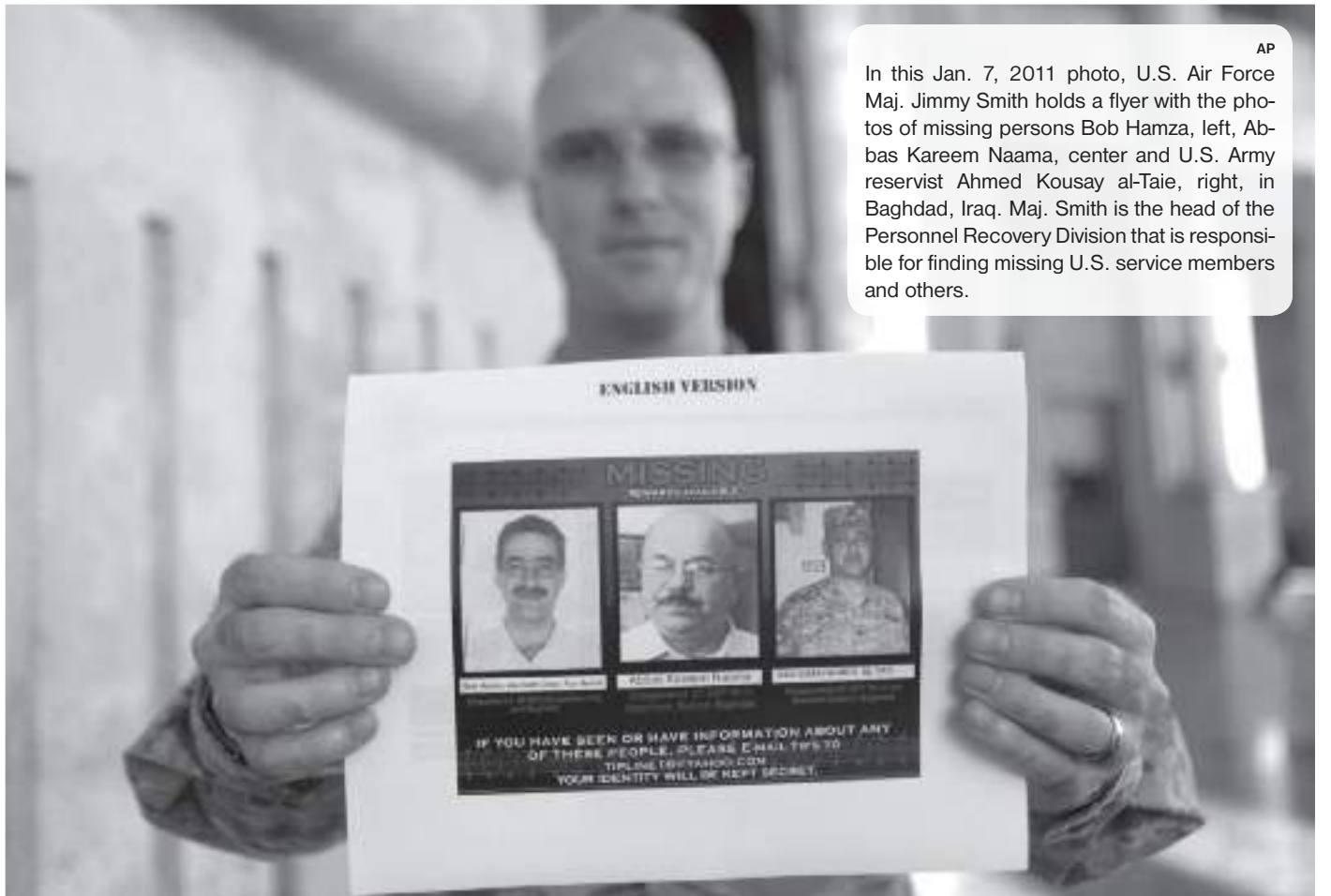
The search effort is now in the hands of the military's Personnel Recovery Division, a group of 20 people overseen by Col. Michael Infanti of Stafford, Virginia.

Infanti was the battalion commander in charge of the search for three U.S. soldiers who went missing after their unit was ambushed south of Baghdad in May 2007. Their remains were found more than a year later, after Infanti and other soldiers, who had spent months combing through the canal-lined terrain, had returned to the U.S.

Besides al-Taie, the Personnel Recovery Division is also looking for seven other Americans, four South Africans and a British man.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Jimmy Smith, the division's deputy director, said nine American

In this Jan. 7, 2011 photo, U.S. Air Force Maj. Jimmy Smith holds a flyer with the photos of missing persons Bob Hamza, left, Abbas Kareem Naama, center and U.S. Army reservist Ahmed Kousay al-Taie, right, in Baghdad, Iraq. Maj. Smith is the head of the Personnel Recovery Division that is responsible for finding missing U.S. service members and others.



abductees, including three who were still alive, have been recovered in Iraq since 2004.

The military said it is developing a plan to transfer the cases concerning American citizens to the U.S. State Department, which has promised to maintain a strong diplomatic presence after the troops leave. The other cases will be turned over to their respective countries.

Many kidnap victims were engineers and businessmen participating in the effort to rebuild Iraq.

Jeffrey Ake, of LaPorte, Indiana, has been missing since April 11, 2005, when he was abducted by masked gunmen at a water treatment plant where he was working in the Taji area north of Baghdad. A witness said the kidnappers tied Ake's hands behind his back and placed him in a black vehicle that sped away, according to a U.S. military incident report released by WikiLeaks.

Ake, a father of four who was 47 when he was captured, was last seen in a video two days later in which masked gunmen stood by as he pleaded for his life.

The U.S. military said his captors called Ake's wife, Liliana, shortly after the video was broadcast and began making demands but at some point cut off communication for unknown reasons.

Since then, just silence.

Infanti stresses that he and his team haven't given up on finding someone alive.

"Until somebody shows me different, they're alive. I don't care how long it's been," he said. "It doesn't turn out the way you want to all the time but you don't stop."



This undated file frame grab from an Al Jazeera broadcast on April 13, 2005, claims to show an American who had been kidnapped in Iraq two days before. A spokesman for the U.S. Embassy said the man's name was Jeffrey Ake, but gave no further details.

Overdrive

Ford roars back with 2011 Taurus

By TOM INCANTALUPO
NEWSDAY

If reaction on the street is any indication, Ford scored a slam dunk with the styling of the newest Taurus; rarely has any family sedan I have driven garnered so much praise.

But the Taurus is more than just a pretty face. What is, for now at least, Ford's flagship to replace the discontinued Crown Victoria is a car that surprises, delights and rarely disappoints.

The biggest surprise to this driver was the handling, thanks

to some changes made for 2011 to the suspension and steering. The Taurus corners like a much lighter vehicle and remains stable on the worst of roads. Loyal Crown Vic owners might, however, find the ride too firm and the steering requiring more effort than they prefer.

Delights include the quiet cabin, a huge trunk with a pass-through to the rear seat, a \$26,000 starting price and brisk acceleration from a very smooth 263-hp, 3.5-liter, V-6 engine. The government's fuel economy estimates are impressive

NUTS & BOLTS

Vehicle tested:

Engine: 3.5-liter V-6, 263 hp.

Fuel: Regular

Transmission: Six-speed automatic, all-wheel drive

Safety: Six air bags; 4-wheel disc brakes w/anti-lock and stability control; reverse- obstacle detection with cross-traffic warning; collision warning with pre-braking boost; blind-spot warning; tire pressure monitoring, automatic crash notification of 911.

Place of assembly: Chicago

Trunk: 20.1 cubic feet

EPA fuel economy estimates: 17 mpg city; 25 mpg highway

Price as driven: \$41,085, including freight

Bottom line: Mostly surprises and delights.

for so large and powerful a car: 18 miles per gallon in city driving and 28 mpg on the highway with front-wheel drive, 17 and 25 with all-wheel as I sampled it. I averaged 21.6 mpg.

A few gripes: While the Taurus' dashboard controls are self-explanatory, some are difficult to locate at night because they're small and not distinctively shaped to facilitate finding them by touch. And the automatic high-beams control feature is easily fooled by a bright green traffic signal and too slow to switch off when

the Taurus catches up to another car and its brights blind the other's car driver in the rearview mirrors.

The six-speed automatic transmission can be manually shifted only by pulling the shift lever back into manual, then using steering paddles. Most carmakers permit manual shifting with the shift lever—the accustomed way for those of us who are used to real manual transmissions.

Back on the upside, the Taurus comes “recommended” by Consumer Reports, with reliability reported to be average by magazine readers who drive Tauruses. Lincoln sells a version of this car called the MKS.

Check tires when car pulls to side

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: I've noticed my car seems to pull to the right as I am driving. If I briefly let go of the steering wheel it will slowly wants to turn right. I noticed this when taking a long trip, as the effort needed to correct the pull became tiresome. What could cause this?—Paul Kenney

ANSWER: There can be several reasons for vehicle to pull to one side while driving. They are road crown, tire problems, suspension misalignment, dragging brakes—rarely—or a power steering fault, even more rarely.

Two-lane roads can sometimes slope quite a bit to each side, causing a noticeable amount of unavoidable pull. Freeways are typically flatter, and a vehicle in good condition should track straight here with little or no steering input. I'm guessing your long trip included freeway driving, and if pulling was noticed, you do have a problem.

Correct tire pressure is vitally important for many reasons. A low front tire or even a rear tire can contribute to a pulling condition to that side.

Uneven tread wear can also contribute to pulling, if the tread is worn more on one side than the other. Uneven tread wear is caused by misalignment of the wheels. A tire that leans out vertically will wear more on the outer edge, and vice versa. An incorrect toe measurement, when the left and right tires do not track parallel, can cause tread to be scrubbed off, typically more so on one side.

On very rare occasions, a tire can be improperly assembled, with internal components biased to one side, which can cause a pull. This would be apparent right away after installing the tire rather than cropping up later.

Finally, a mismatched tire could result in a pull. Swapping tires side to side (temporarily for directional tires) is an easy way to rule in or out a tire is-

sue—does the pull change?

Improper wheel alignment is another consideration. Is there a chance the vehicle, perhaps driven by another person, sustained a curb or off-road object collision? Look for signs of impact on the tire, such as gouges or scuffing, and check for a scraped, shiny, or dented edge on the wheel. Also look for a noncentered steering wheel or excessive tire tread wear.

On a front-wheel-drive car, another possible cause of misalignment is shifting of the engine/transmission cradle. Sometimes the attaching bolts can work slightly loose, allowing this large assembly to shift slightly within the vehicle body, altering the location of the lower suspension parts.

Dragging brakes, due to a binding brake caliper or over-filled master cylinder reservoir, is also a possibility, but a long shot. An easy way to check for this is to compare the temperature—by touch or, better yet, with a temperature gun—of each wheel's center or hub area. If there's more than the slightest difference from side to side, dragging brakes are likely the cause. Test the temperature before the drive, also, to rule out the effects of sun and shade.

Verifying a power-steering pull, which is highly unlikely, is also easy. With the engine running and both front wheels off the ground and freely suspended, both wheels should remain straight and require identical force applied to the steering wheel to execute a turn.

I didn't include brake pull, which only occurs when braking, as that's a different story. My hope is your continuous pull is caused by something as simple as an underinflated or oddly worn tire.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him e-mail at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

First Death Anniversary



In Loving Memory of Our Beloved

Fidel Atalig Mendiola

We the family, of the late Fidel Atalig Mendiola would like to invite all our families, relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the anniversary of our beloved's passing unto eternal life.

The following mass will be offered at San Isidro Church, Rota at 7:00pm everyday from January 26, 2011, Wednesday to February 03, 2011, Thursday except on January 30, 2011, Sunday, Mass will be offered at 8:00am.

Mass will also be offered at San Francisco de Borja Church, Rota at 6:00pm on January 26 & February 02, 2011, Wednesdays. From January 27 to February 01, 2011, Mass will be offered at 6:00am. On the Final Day, February 03, 2011, Thursday, Mass will be offered at 6:00am followed by his Responso at San Jose Cemetery, Rota.

Nightly Rosary will be recited every evening at 8:00pm at his residence at Mananana, Rota except on the final day, February 03, 2011, Thursday rosary will be recited at 5:30pm.

Your Prayers and Presence are greatly appreciated.

Thank you and Un Dangkulu na Si Yu'Us Ma'ase'!

Fermina S. Mendiola and Children

Life & Style

Playboy TV network inviting women

LOS ANGELES (AP)—For generations, Playboy's image has been "Entertainment for Men." Now, it's TV network wants these men to watch their movies and shows with their wives and women friends.

The premium cable network, which celebrates its 30th anniversary next year, is starting "TV for 2," slightly steamy programming designed for women and men to experience together. The idea was unwrapped last weekend with the premiere of "Brooklyn Kinda Love," a reality series made by the producers of HBO's "Taxi Cab Confessions."

Playboy will soon surround "Brooklyn Kinda Love" with other shows in Friday and Saturday night blocks and, if things go really well, hopes to spin "TV for 2" into its own network, said Gary Rosenson, senior vice president and general manager

of domestic TV for Playboy.

The success of "Sex and the City" was one development that made Playboy realize women could be attracted to sexy programming, as long as it was made with them in mind, he said.

Playboy's programming is generally a mix of shows that have some nudity, such as Playmate profiles, the "Shootout" competition of photographers and models vying to be in movies, "Naughty Amateur Home Videos" and the type of movies also commonly available on outlets such as Cinemax.

For more graphic or hardcore pornography, showing explicit sexual acts, the Internet has become the playground.

"Everyone has a triple-XXX theater in their homes, if they want to turn it on," said Sharon Lee, a culture trend analyst who

did research for Playboy.

She conducted target groups of men, most of whom had stories of being caught checking out Internet porn by their wives or girlfriends. What they really wanted, she said, was more intimacy with their partners. Lee said she tested some of Playboy's new programming with couples, and 72 percent said watching the programs together was a catalyst for revving up their sex lives. Most said it promoted more openness and communication about sex.

"Brooklyn Kinda Love" features four couples, including one lesbian couple. They navigate several relationship issues, including one woman who communicated with an old boyfriend through Facebook while her current paramour slept, and a randy but annoying woman miffed that her boyfriend does

not want sex three or four times a day. The sex scenes are often tangential, some shot with infrared cameras. The

producers are Joe and Harry Glantz, who also make "The Defenders" for CBS.

"We want to see the honesty

of what love and relationships look like, and I think that's what people want to see," Rosenson said.

Scholar brings Sistine Chapel books to light

DALLAS (AP)—Forty books once used by popes and other church dignitaries for services in the Sistine Chapel, largely forgotten after they were spirited away from Rome in 1798, are featured in a new exhibit.

For its only U.S. stop, the display of the books with vibrant illustrations complementing liturgical writings opens Sunday at the Meadows Museum at Southern Methodist University.

"The Lost Manuscripts From the Sistine Chapel: An Epic Journey From Rome to Toledo," which was on view at the National Library of Spain in Madrid in the fall, will run through April 23 in Dallas before the books, called codices, go back to their respective archives at three libraries in Spain, away from public view.

The show is the culmination of more than a decade of research that began when Italian scholar Elena De Laurentiis, while doing research in Spain, happened upon several photographs of the books with a papal seal and wondered how they had made their way to Spain. An archbishop had taken them from Rome as Napoleon's armies invaded in 1798.

With a label on the photographs directing her to the Cathedral of Toledo, her research took her to the mountaintop Spanish city that spreads out with a maze of streets. She found that the archbishop of Toledo—Cardinal Francisco Antonio de Lorenzana y Buitron—had taken the books from Rome as Napoleon's armies invaded in 1798. He then donated the works to the cathedral's library, even putting a handwritten note in the books about the rescue.


"There's not a lot known about how he acquired them," she said through a translator. "In order to save them, he sent them to the cathedral."



This Jan. 20, 2011 photo shows books on display for "The Lost Manuscripts from the Sistine Chapel: An Epic Journey from Rome to Toledo," exhibit at the Meadows Museum at SMU in Dallas.

Death and Funeral Announcement

In Loving Memory of: Estella Magofna Pangelinan



Our dearly beloved mother, grandmother & great grandmother, born February 26, 1939, was called to her eternal rest on Tuesday, January 18, 2011 at the age of 71.

She now joins her:

Husband : Miguel Basa Pangelinan "Inden"
Parents : Vicente Fegurgur Magofna & Vicenta Santos Blas Magofna
Son : Marcelino Magofna Pangelinan "Max"
Brothers and Sisters : Clara Sablan, Jose Magofna, Emerenciana Taitano, Caridad Falig, Pedro Magofna, Miguel Magofna, and Santiago Magofna
In-Laws : Antonio Manahane Pangelinan & Isabel Basa Pangelinan

She will be extremely missed and forever remembered in the hearts of her:

Children : Crispin & Grace Pangelinan (Ryan, Rufina/Anton Santos & Children, Jerome/Jolyne Iguel & Children, Crispin Jr/Fabiana Pangelinan & Children, Shane Pangelinan, Dora Pangelinan (Estella, Zachary & April)
Daughter-In-Law : Millerie Pangelinan (Fred Pangelinan, Antonio/Triny Aldan, Michael/Tara Aldan & Child, Lisa/Lor Ohry & Child)
Brother : Gregorio & Natalia Magofna and Children
Sister : Carmen B. Pangelinan & Children
Sisters-In-Law : Ana Magofna, Angie Magofna & Remedio Magofna

And numerous Pangelinan-in-laws, nieces & nephews.

Mass is being offered nightly at 6:00pm immediately followed by the rosary at Bithen Delos Remedios Church in Tanapag. On Wednesday, January 26, 2011, our beloved mother will be escorted from CHC to Santa Remedios Church at 7:00am for viewing. Mass of a Christian burial will be at 11:00am followed by Services at the Tanapag Cemetery.

Your prayers, thoughts and presence are sincerely appreciated.

The Family

CELEBRATING ONE YEAR OF ETERNAL LIFE

A Year Ago, God called

Juan Cruz Aguon

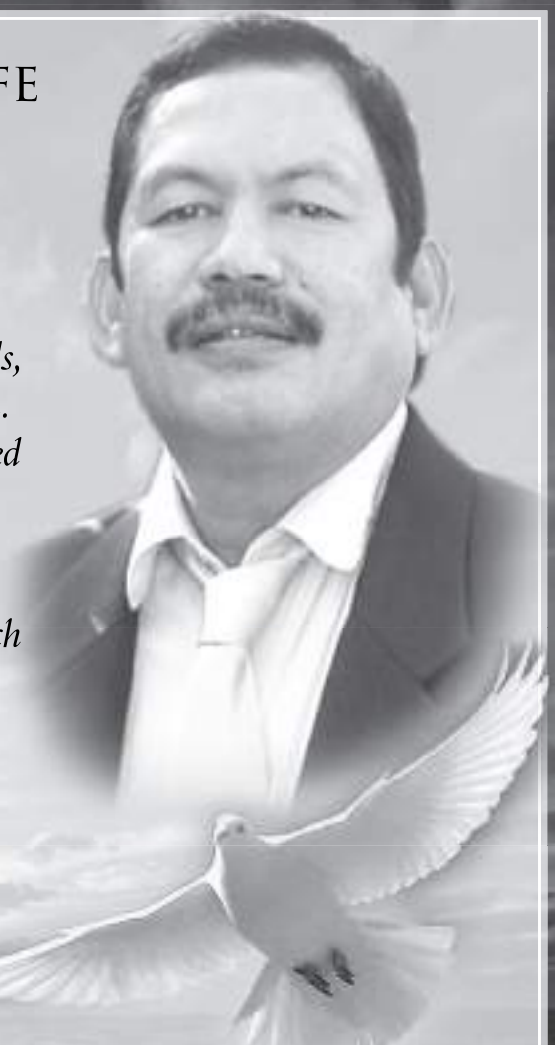

to his eternal home in heaven. We gather as family, friends, and relatives to pray for this wonderful and loving person. He will live on forever through Us all who cared and loved him as we remember him in our prayers.

And so, we the family respectfully begin the nine days of daily Masses scheduled 6:00 a.m., at Kristo Rai Church beginning Wednesday, January 26, 2011 through Thursday, February 03, 2011.

We are sincerely grateful for your presence and support.

Thank You – Si Yu'us Ma'ase

From The Children & Family

Portman rings in 2011 with awards, 4 movies, baby

By SANDY COHEN
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—For Natalie Portman, 2011 is already shaping up to be an unforgettable year.

The actress is getting big awards buzz for her turn as a ballerina gone mad in "Black Swan." She already won a Golden Globe, she is up for a Screen Actors Guild award and she is sure to hear her name when Oscar nominations are announced next week. Portman also has four other movies slated for release this year, including the first produced by her own company.

Oh, and she is pregnant with her first child and engaged to be married.

"I'm very, very excited," she says during an interview to promote her romantic comedy "No

Strings Attached," which opens Friday. "I feel very, very lucky."

And maybe just a bit overwhelmed.

Ever poised in interviews, and always the picture of perfection at events, the Harvard grad and Oscar nominee (for 2004's "Closer") says having four movies in the pipeline at the same time she is starting a family is "a little insane."

Not that she is letting it get to her or letting it show, except for maybe the family part. Although she has a spate of scheduled appearances coming up—awards shows, film festivals, premieres—she is not dashing around town juggling meetings and fittings. Instead, the star who recently relocated to Los Angeles from her hometown of New York says she is just relaxing with her mom and enjoying

the West Coast weather.

"I think because so much is going on, it's just sort of going over my head," Portman says, her petite frame folded on a sofa, her hand intuitively resting on her burgeoning belly. "I don't know that I'm taking it all in. I'm just like, 'Oh, the sun is shining. I'm with my mom. I'm with my dog. Life is good.'"

Indeed, things are good for the 29-year-old. She is engaged to Benjamin Millepied, a ballet dancer and choreographer who worked on "Black Swan," and they are expecting their first child together. He was her date at the Globes, and when she was named best actress in a drama, she thanked him for "helping me to continue this creation of creating more life."

Portman is also giving life to new movies through her produc-

tion company, handsomecharlie films. The company's first feature, "Hesher," in which she stars with Joseph Gordon-Levitt, premiered at Sundance and is set for release this year. Handsomecharlie also is developing "Best Buds," a road-trip tale of a bride-to-be who staves off a nervous breakdown by hanging with her friends and smoking marijuana. Portman is set to star.

"We like all sorts of movies: drama, thriller, sci-fi, comedy," she says of herself and producing partner Annette Savitch. "But I think something that definitely appeals to us, just because of the lack of it, is strong female comedies and female friendship movies, unlike 'Black Swan' where they're ripping each other's hair out, where girls are funny, supportive friends for each other."

Portman dabbles in on-screen female friendship in "No Strings Attached." She plays Emma Kurtzman, a doctor for whom love is like a nasty rash: irritating, painful and best avoided. Meanwhile, her colleagues (played by Greta Gerwig and Mindy Kaling) want boyfriends and lament the lack of good guys out there. They support Emma as she enters a sex-only relationship with Adam (Ashton Kutcher), zinging one-liners and cracking wise throughout.

It is the rare romantic comedy where women get laughs, Portman says.

"I had been looking for a funny female character for a long time," she says. "I feel like in romantic comedies often it's just the girl who gets to kind of wear cute clothes and wants to get married at the end, which is always fun to watch but it's not necessarily a challenge or exciting to do."

Director Ivan Reitman says Portman found the script on her own and asked for the part. He recalls being surprised at her interest, then met with her.

"I realized as I was talking to her: Oh, this is the girl," he says. "She is as smart as this character is, because she needs to be that intelligent, but more than that, she has the strength that this girl has, and she has the complexity to portray somebody that is a little bit messed up."



Natalie Portman arrives at the 12th Annual Warner Brothers and In-Style Golden Globe After Party at The Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sunday, Jan. 16, 2011 in Beverly Hills, Calif.

The role called for Portman to be saucy, sexy and even drunk in one scene. Her character is bold, confident and sexually self-assured, the complete opposite of her award-winning "Black Swan" character, who is repressed, girlish and afraid.

The back-to-back contrasting roles was "one of those sort of accidents," the actress says.

"I'd been with 'Black Swan' for 10 years before it got made, and I'd been with this movie for like three years before it got made, and it just happened to get financing in the same period," she says. "But it's always welcome to completely shed a character and do something very, very different."

She will be seen in two more very different roles this year. She

plays a warrior opposite Danny McBride and James Franco in the comedy-adventure "Your Highness," and a human friend of a Norse god in Marvel Studios' anticipated "Thor."

Portman might be promoting her movies through most of her pregnancy.

"The thing that's great is that I'm really proud of all the movies. I'm really excited about every single one," she says. "I don't think it's great that they're like all in this time period. I wish they were more spaced out, but I don't really have control over that. But at least people won't see my face for a while afterwards."

For now, though, expect Portman aplenty in what's becoming Natalie's big year.

'The King's Speech' is tops at producer awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"The King's Speech" claimed the crown for best film at the Producers Guild of America Awards on Saturday, knocking off Golden Globes best drama winner and presumed Oscar front-runner "The Social Network."

The film also beat out nominees "127 Hours," "Black Swan," "Inception," "The Fighter," "The Kids Are All Right," "The Town," "Toy Story 3," and "True Grit."

The PGA awards, hosted by filmmaker Judd Apatow at the Beverly Hilton, are part of the steady stream of ceremonies leading up to the Academy Awards.

"The Social Network," which stars Jesse Eisenberg as Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, appeared to be on the fast track to a best picture Oscar after dominating honors from top critics groups and winning the Golden Globe last week.

But Saturday's win solidified a spot as an Academy Award contender for "The King's Speech," which features Golden Globe best actor winner Colin Firth playing Queen Elizabeth II's father, George VI, as he tries to overcome a debilitating stammer.

The Producers Guild followed the lead of the Oscars last year and doubled its best-

picture field to 10 movies.

In other PGA categories, Pixar's "Toy Story 3" won for best animated feature and the chronicle of modern education "Waiting for Superman" took top documentary honors.

On the television side, AMC's "Mad Men" won for best drama series for the third straight year, and ABC's "Modern Family" won best comedy, beating out previous two-time winner "30 Rock."

HBO's "The Pacific" won for best TV movie or miniseries, and Comedy Central's "The Colbert Report" won for top live entertainment or reality show.

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NOW SHOWING



No Strings Attached
 Friday 4:05 7:05 9:45
 Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:05 9:45
 Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:05
 Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:05
Natalie Portman, Ashton Kutcher
 Comedy • Rated R

Synopsis

Natalie Portman plays Emma Franklin, a doctor who's not really looking for love and is not ready for a relationship because of time issues and just wants to have someone to have sex with. She decided to have sex with her friend, Adam Kurtzman played by Ashton Kutcher. Things get complicated when a plain sexual relationship is mixed up with emotions. Adam falls for Emma and the problem arises when the feeling is not mutual.



The Green Hornet
 Friday 4:00 7:00 9:30
 Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:30
 Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
 Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
Seth Rogen, Cameron Diaz
 Comedy • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

By day, Britt Reid (Seth Rogen) is a millionaire publisher and popular media figure, but by night, Reid assumes the identity of fearless crime fighter The Green Hornet and teams with his trusted sidekick, Kato (Stephen Chow), to keep the streets safe for average citizens. Producer Neal H. Moritz spearheads this big-screen adaptation of the popular radio serial, comic book, film, and television series originated by Lone Ranger creators Fran Striker and George W. Trendle.



Gulliver's Travels
 Friday 4:30 7:30 9:55
 Saturday 1:30 4:30 7:30 9:55
 Sunday 1:30 4:30 7:30
 Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:30
Jack Black, Emily Blunt
 Comedy, Fantasy • Rated PG

Synopsis

Jack Black stars in the 20th Century Fox adaptation of Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels with this fantasy-filled comedic production. This take on the timeless tale revolves around a shipwrecked journalist (Black) who discovers an island in the heart of the Bermuda Triangle where he is the biggest occupant in comparison to its tiny inhabitants. Shark Tale's Rob Letterman directs from a script by Forgetting Sarah Marshall's Nick Stoller and Joe Stillman (Shrek).



Season Of The Witch
 Friday 4:10 7:10 9:50
 Saturday 1:10 4:10 7:10 9:50
 Sunday 1:10 4:10 7:10
 Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:10
Nicolas Cage, Ron Perlman
 Thriller • Rated PG 13



Little Fockers
 Friday 4:20 7:20 9:40
 Saturday 1:20 4:20 7:20 9:40
 Sunday 1:20 4:20 7:20
 Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:20
Robert De Niro, Ben Stiller
 Comedy • Rated PG 13



True Grit
 Friday 4:25 7:25 9:35
 Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:25 9:35
 Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:25
 Mon thru Thurs 4:25 7:25
Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon
 Western • Rated PG 13



The Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader
 Friday 4:15 7:15 10:00
 Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:15 10:00
 Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:15
 Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:15
Georgie Henley, Ben Barnes
 Fantasy, Children's, Family • Rated PG

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'No Strings' attaches to top box-office spot

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Audiences weren't afraid of committing to "No Strings Attached," making it the No. 1 movie at the box office in its opening weekend.

The romantic comedy from Paramount Pictures earned an estimated \$20.3 million, according to studio estimates released Sunday.

Ashton Kutcher and Natalie Portman star as friends who try to maintain a purely sexual relationship with each other, even as they find they're falling in love. The strong supporting cast includes Greta Gerwig, Mindy Kaling, Lake Bell and Kevin Kline.

Last week's No. 1 movie, Columbia Pictures' action comedy "The Green Hornet," dropped to second place with \$18.1 million. It has now made \$63.4 million total. Seth Rogen stars as the title

1. "No Strings Attached," \$20.3 million.
2. "The Green Hornet," \$18.1 million.
3. "The Dilemma," \$9.7 million.
4. "The King's Speech," \$9.2 million.
5. "True Grit," \$8 million.
6. "Black Swan," \$6.2 million.
7. "The Fighter," \$4.5 million.
8. "Little Fockers," \$4.4 million.
9. "Yogi Berra," \$4.1 million.
10. "Tron: Legacy," \$3.7 million.

playboy-turned-superhero, based on the 1930s radio show, with Taiwanese pop star Jay Chou as his sidekick, Kato.

Much of the success of "No Strings Attached" could be attributed to the pairing of director Ivan Reitman and Montecito Pictures, which brought the movie in at a budget of just \$25 million, said

Don Harris, Paramount's executive vice president of distribution.

He thought audiences were drawn to the chemistry between the co-stars: "Natalie Portman couldn't be any hotter, and I think this is the kind of movie Ashton Kutcher had hoped to make and be in during his career. They go well together."

"It's a so-called 'chick flick' because of the subject matter, but it had appeal for both men and women with the whole idea of being 'friends with benefits,'" Dergarabedian said. "For it to do \$20 million is fairly impressive, considering it's rated R and January's not a hotbed of huge grosses, unless you're 'Avatar' and you're holding over."

It was the 11th weekend in a row that was down from the same time

the previous year, when James Cameron's behemoth "Avatar" was still dominating from its debut at the end of 2009.

While Dergarabedian expected 2011 could be a record year at the box office, with total grosses surpassing \$11 billion for the first time ever, "the huge year hasn't kicked in yet."

"I don't see much light at the end of the tunnel until March, when 'The Adjustment Bureau' and other movies open," he said, referring to the upcoming thriller starring Matt Damon and Emily Blunt. "We could be looking at a pretty sizable down streak."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. Final figures will be released Monday.

Franzen, Smith nominees for critics awards

NEW YORK (AP)—Jonathan Franzen is back in the awards circle.

Franzen's "Freedom," among last year's most highly praised novels, is a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle awards. Franzen had been bypassed for the National Book Awards, judged by fellow authors, but was an obvious choice for a prize voted on by reviewers, many of whom placed "Freedom" on their annual best-of lists. None of the fiction nominees for the National Book Award, including winner Jaimy Gordon's "Lord of Misrule," was chosen for the critics circle prize.

The 31 nominees in six competitive categories (autobiography has six finalists) announced Saturday were an international blend of popular authors such as Franzen, Christopher Hitchens and Patti Smith and the kind of lesser-known picks critics pride themselves on, such as German-Dutch novelist Hans Keilson, 101 years old, and cited for the acclaimed "Comedy in a Key." Finalists were published by Random House Inc., Simon & Schuster and other major New York houses, and by McSweeney's, Graywolf Press and the Feminist Press.

Winners will be announced March 10. There are no cash prizes.

Nominees also included Jennifer Egan's novel "A Visit From the Goon Squad," Isabel Wilkerson's history "The Warmth of Other Suns" and memoirs by Hitchens ("Hitch-22") and Smith, whose "Just Kids" won an NBA for nonfiction. Books written in foreign languages but available in English translation also are eligible, so fiction finalists besides Egan and Franzen included Keilson and Israel's David Grossman for "To the End of the Land." The fifth nominee was Irish novelist Paul Murray for "Skipper Dies."

Elton John feels like 'second-class citizen'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Sir Elton John is "fed up" with being a treated like a "second-class citizen" in the U.S. That's why the 63-year-old gay singer said he took a stand last week during a performance at a private Beverly Hills fundraiser for the ongoing legal challenge to California's gay marriage ban.

The outspoken British piano man, who became a parent to a baby boy on Christmas Day with partner David Furnish, added that "as I get older, I get more angry about it."

"In this country, we need more dialogue," he said during an interview Friday. "We don't need any more stone throwing. We don't need any more vitriol. We need

people to say, 'OK. I'm straight. You're gay. Let's get along. I'm Republican. You're Democratic. Let's work together.' I'm sick and tired of people being hateful to each other in this country."

John disappointed some gay rights activists after California's Proposition 8 banning gay marriage passed in 2008 when he said he had no desire to get married and was satisfied with his civil partnership in England. He sang a different tune Wednesday when he praised the effort to overturn Proposition 8 and promised to do everything he could to support it, even though he is British.

The couple's son, Zachary Jackson Levon Furnish-John, was

born in California through a surrogate mother. John said he was disappointed that members of the Church of England questioned his parenthood in the days following his son's birth. He insisted that he's not against religion and that "Jesus was a wonderful, compassionate man, who forgave on the cross."

"Everyone is entitled to have their own beliefs and their own spirituality," said John. "The big difference is that the dogma of the church can be so hateful and divisive. It's stuck in the stone age. We don't live in the stone age anymore. The church is losing people left, right and center because people are fed up with the rhetoric that they're giving them."

Royal engagement photos 'inspired by Diana'

LONDON (AP)—The engagement photos of Prince William and Kate Middleton were inspired by the mood at photo shoots with Princess Diana, photographer Mario Testino said.

The celebrity photographer told American Vogue that playing music by French singer Dalida—the same tracks used while he photographed Diana, William's late mother—was the secret to the royal couple's relaxed poses.

"The contrast of the contemporary informal music playing in the beautiful rooms with so much history caused a lot of laughter," he was quoted as saying.

William and Middleton chose two images for release after the photo shoot at St. James's Palace last month, shortly after they announced their engagement. The couple, set to wed April 29, looked relaxed and happy in the images.

Middleton was an "easy sitter" because of her natural grace, Testino said, adding that she was humorous but also appeared to have developed "a perfect sense of royal responsibility."

The Peruvian fashion photographer has worked with William many times in the past, and is a royal family favorite who captured some of the most iconic images of Diana. A series of glamorous black-and-white images he took of her were published in Vanity Fair in 1997, shortly before her death in a Paris car crash.

Flavor Flav opens his 1st chicken eatery in Iowa

CLINTON, Iowa (AP)—Rapper and reality TV star Flavor Flav is bringing the flavor of chicken to Iowa.

Flav's Fried Chicken opens Monday in Clinton, Iowa. Flav has been there preparing for the launch and told the Clinton Herald he'll

visit often for promotions and even work the fryer.

Flav says it's the first in a chain that stemmed from the 99 cent wings he served at Mama Cimino in Las Vegas. His business partner is the brother of that restaurant's owner.

Flavor Flav, whose real name

William Drayton Jr., founded hip-hop group Public Enemy in the '80s. He found fame anew in 2004 on the third season of VH1's "The Surreal Life." He also starred in the network's "Flavor of Love."

He has a culinary degree and restaurant experience.



This is a Tuesday Nov. 16, 2010, file photo of Britain's Prince William and his fiancée Kate Middleton arrive for a media photocall, media at St. James's Palace in London, Tuesday Nov. 16, 2010, after they announced their engagement.

Massage puts healthy glow in couple's happy marriage

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: So often I read about troubled marriages in your column. May I share with you something that my husband and I started doing that has transformed what I thought was a good marriage into a blissful one?



One day, after complaining that we had no quality time together—we rarely talked, much less made love—my husband suggested we turn off the television and offered to give me a massage.

Ever since, four or five times a week, once the children are in bed, we go into our bedroom, take off our clothes and give each other long massages. Sometimes we spend the entire time in conversation, other times we savor the peace and quiet. Sometimes we make passionate love; other times we fall asleep naked in each other's arms, completely content.

It doesn't matter how it turns out; it's wonderful and it has made the rest of our lives less stressful and more enjoyable. Our sex life is better than before the children came, and we sleep in the nude more often.

I hope you'll print this. More marriages would take a turn for the better if couples made time for each other and discovered the wonders of massage.

HAPPIER THAN EVER

DEAR HAPPIER: That's a terrific suggestion, and one that should be taken to heart. I hope it doesn't rub anyone the wrong way.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am in a bit of a dilemma, and I would appreciate some advice.

I divorced my husband six years ago because he was physically and mentally abusive to me. We had two children together. They are now being raised by me and my new husband.

Abby, my ex-husband never told his family the truth about why we divorced. He told them I was unfaithful and other things which you can't print in a newspaper.

My question: What should I do when the kids graduate or they get married?

I have tried to make peace with several members of his family. All they did was rip into me and give me their opinion about what I supposedly did to their brother. I don't want to put my family in the position of being berated and attacked when the children have a special occasion. On the other hand, I don't want to cut them off from their other family at important occasions in their lives.

What should I do?

UNDECIDED IN BELLEVUE, WASH.

DEAR UNDECIDED: When the time comes, ask your husband and the children how they feel about including these relatives. My advice would be to invite them, and place the burden of whether to attend the events or not on them.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: How do you tell someone how well you can do something without sounding like you're bragging?

STELLA IN DALLAS

DEAR STELLA: It's not bragging to mention that you excel at something. It only becomes obnoxious if you dwell on it to the point that you forget to show an interest in the accomplishments of others.

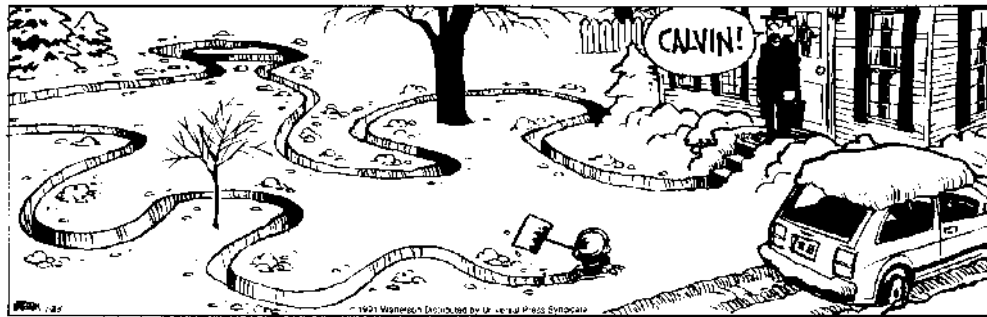
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24 Relative standing
25 Capri or Wight
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31 Impaired by age and dampness
32 Past

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3 Standard
4 Ottoman
5 Profit
6 Boom
7 Managers
8 Amount
9 Dove's calls
10 Advantage
11 Trans-
12 Birthright
23 Winglike
24 Regulation
26 English county
27 Three feet
28 Curved molding
29 Deteriorates
31 Creche
34 Character
35 Way out there
37 It holds the mayo
38 This and that
39 Simple
40 Roe
41 Author
44 Coffee vessel
45 Mentalist
46 A
47 Hair coloring

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-25

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Alicia Keys, 31; Mia Kirshner, 36; Ana Ortiz, 40; Jennifer Lewis, 54

Happy Birthday: Your charm and outgoing nature will make you easy to approach. Show your talent and ability to those who can make a difference to your position or your financial status. Love is in the stars, so making your current relationship better or getting into a relationship if you are single should be one of your goals. Your numbers are 11, 17, 19, 22, 29, 31, 40

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You'll be prone to overreact, overdo and overindulge. Discipline will be required. Late in the day, find a way to spice up your life or to make improvements that will bring you greater self-confidence. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): There is no point becoming angry or losing time or sleep over what someone else is doing. You have too much going for you to stop moving forward. Count on your resilience and diplomacy to see you through. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): There is plenty to accomplish that will set you up professionally and personally. Partnerships are apparent and displaying your talent and ideas will attract positive attention. You may be tired, but the gains you make will be worth it. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Children, friends and relatives will have a tendency to restrict what you can accomplish. You need to focus on making the changes that will enable you to get ahead. Be honest about what you will do and when. ★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Someone will expect a lot from you. Declining may not be the answer and could cost you financially and emotionally. Weigh the pros and cons and you will come up with a solution that will help you avoid an argument that cannot be won. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Share your thoughts and participate in what's going on in your family or community. The decision you make now will mold the way you move forward personally, professionally and financially. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Creative endeavors will bring the highest return. You have plenty to offer but charity begins at home and must be used for your own advancement and success. Progressive action will bring positive results. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Look at your old ideas and resurrect whatever you can and make a go of it. You'll be surprised at what you can accomplish now. With a few changes you will reach the goals you set. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Emphasis should be on home, family and your current position. Look at what's being offered in your community. Alter your outlook and goals to suit the times and you will find the success you need to live life the most suitable way for you. ★★★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't give in to peer pressure. It's important to

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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follow your dreams if you want to achieve satisfaction and happiness. Stay focused on the end result and the perks that come with it. ★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You can make alterations to your life if you pursue goals that will bring you greater stability. You can achieve greater acceptance within important partnerships and can put your attributes to better use. A relationship will help you reach your goals. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): It's what you do for others that will bring you greater recognition. Make a difference—be the one to put the past behind you so that you can make the most of the future. Allow yourself the freedom of being released from extra obligations. ★★

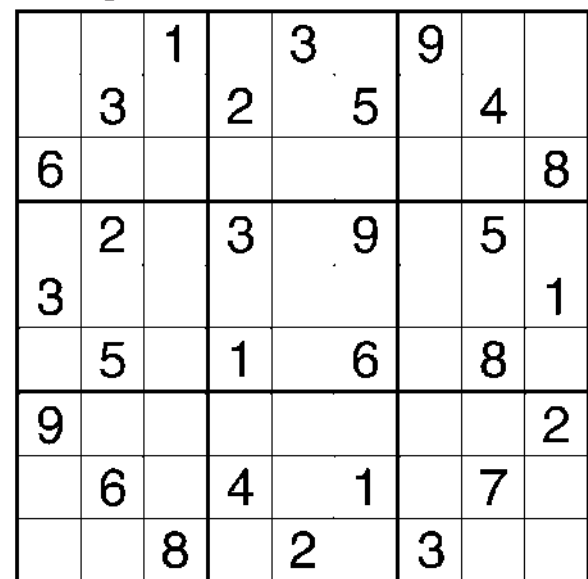
Birthday Baby: You are worldly, curious and open to new ideas. You are truthful but diplomatic and industrious but cautious. You instinctually know when to make a move.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

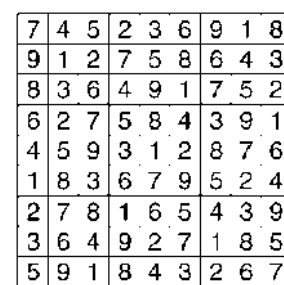


Difficulty Level ★★

1/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★

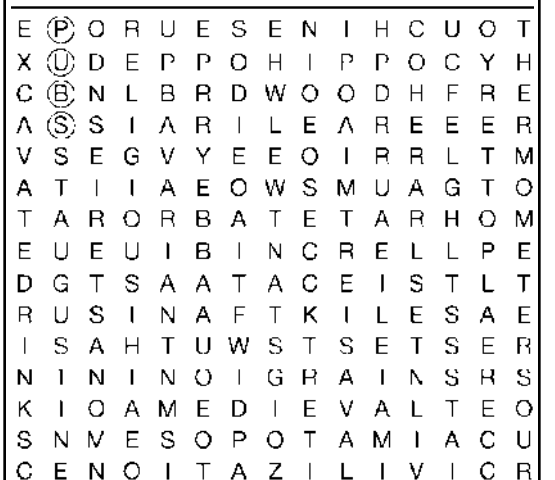
WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The letters spell the Wonderword.

HISTORY OF BEER

Solution: 9 letters



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Yesterday's Answer: Zero Hour

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STUMPED?

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Jets silenced: Steelers win AFC title, 24-19



PITTSBURGH (AP)—Ben Roethlisberger knelt on the turf and buried his head in an AFC championship shirt.

"I'm going to enjoy this," he later said.

No one had to ask what he meant.

A season that began with a four-game suspension is one win away from giving him a third Super Bowl victory.

His Pittsburgh Steelers hung on Sunday and won its third AFC championship in six years, 24-19 over the New York Jets.

Terrible Towels will wave again at the Super Bowl, where the Steelers will meet Green Bay after silencing Rex Ryan's wild bunch. Look out Big D, here comes another Big D—in black and gold, and with an unmatched history of carrying off the Lombardi Trophy.

And here comes a quarterback with a history of winning the big ones.

"Shoot, any time you get to the Super Bowl, it feels good," he said. "I don't care what you're going through or what's going on. We put a lot of stuff behind us early and found a way."

They clearly found a way to shut down the Jets' season, ending it the way it started—with hard knocks. And not the kind on HBO.

The Steelers (14-4) will challenge the Packers, who are 2 1/2-point favorites, with a versatile attack led by their quarterback and running back Rashard Mendenhall.

And with a defense, led by James Harrison, that had a fumble return for a touchdown and a goal-line stand that shut down the Jets' comeback in the fourth quarter. It will certainly test Aaron Rodgers in the title game in Dallas on Feb. 6.

That smothering defense set the tone for most of a frigid night at Heinz Field to end the Jets' stunning postseason run. Ryan slammed down his headset when Antonio Brown caught a pass for a first down that allowed Pittsburgh to hang on and run out the clock.

"It's not always pretty with us," Roethlisberger said, "but we do the job. We have a lot of tenacity. We have a don't quit attitude and mentality. Everybody is just always there for each other."

The Steelers ended the Jets' season with a dominant first half for a 24-3 lead. Mendenhall had 95 of his 121 yards and a touchdown.

"We played a good half. We never played a good game, and that was the difference," Ryan said in a postgame interview with CBS. "You get to this point, you've got to play a great game against a great opponent and we played a good half and that was it."

One more great game by Roethlisberger and his teammates and the sea-



Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger composes himself after the Steelers' 24-19 win over the New York Jets in the AFC Championship NFL football game in Pittsburgh, Sunday, Jan. 23, 2011. T

son will end in a way hardly anyone could foresee back in September.

He sat out the season's first four games for violating the NFL's personal conduct policy—an outgrowth of a college student's accusations that he sexually assaulted her in Georgia last March. The quarterback was never prosecuted over what was the second such set of allegations against him.

Now he will lead the Steelers into their eighth Super Bowl, a game they handle pretty well—and have a record six titles to show for it.

The cocky Jets seemed to have left everything they had in New England last Sunday. There was little trash talking all week and even less fire early in their biggest game since winning the championship 42 years ago. They haven't been back to the Super Bowl.

The Steelers are regulars, including Super Bowl titles for the 2005 and 2008 teams, both led by Roethlisberger and a fierce defense sparked by playmaking safety Troy Polamalu.

Polamalu, his long hair flowing from under his helmet, didn't have to do a whole lot this time. Not with the way his teammates whipped the Jets at the line of scrimmage before a spirited New York surge in the second half.

"We overcame a lot more obstacles this year than we have in the past," Polamalu said. "But we still got one more to go."

And too often, New York's defense

was like a swinging gate that Roethlisberger and Mendenhall ran through with ease.

New York (13-6) failed for the fourth time in the AFC title game since 1969, when the Jets won perhaps the most significant of all Super Bowls. It was a devastating finish, particularly after the Jets beat Peyton Manning and the Colts, then Tom Brady and the Patriots on the road to get to Pittsburgh.

Asked if he would change anything about this season, Ryan said, "I would change the outcome of this game and that's the only thing I would change. We don't need to apologize to anybody. We'll be back, you'll see."

The Steelers snapped New York's hopes of making the Super Bowl a sixth-seed spectacular; the Packers are the NFC's No. 6 seed.

Packers 21, Bears 14

At Chicago, there was one Monster of the Midway in the NFC championship game and his name was Aaron Rodgers.

He wasn't even at his best and, still, he was better than the first, the second and the third quarterback used in vain by the Chicago Bears against their bitter rivals.

Rodgers ran for a score and made a TD-saving tackle in leading the Green Bay Packers into the Super Bowl with a bone-jarring 21-14 victory Sunday over Chicago.

"It's an incredible feeling," Rodgers said. "I'm at a loss for words."

Rodgers played well enough to keep the Bears off balance all afternoon, Green Bay punter Tim Masthay kept Devin Hester under wraps and the Packers' superb defense took care of the rest in knocking the Bears out of the playoffs.

It was the 182nd meeting in the league's most historic feud, and the stakes had never been bigger.

Now the Packers (13-6) are headed to Dallas. And no matter what happens in the Super Bowl on Feb. 6, the Packers and their fans hold ultimate bragging rights over their foes to the south.

Green Bay will play the Pittsburgh Steelers, who topped the New York Jets 24-19 in the AFC championship game. The Packers opened as 2 1/2-point favorites for the game at Cowboys Stadium.

"We made a play to win the game and that's all that matters," Packers linebacker Clay Matthews said. "Keep playing defense the way we know how, and it's going to be tough for teams to beat us."

All Jay Cutler could do was watch, having left the game with a knee injury early in the third quarter. Even before the injury, Cutler was having trouble moving the ball. Worse, he was getting booed by the home fans.

Primary backup Todd Collins replaced Cutler and was jeered even worse. Then little-known backup Ca-

leb Hanie and the Bears (12-6) actually made it a game.

Chicago's third-string quarterback rallied the Bears for a touchdown drive to cut the lead to 14-7 after Chester Taylor's 1-yard touchdown run early in the fourth quarter.

Hanie had a chance to tie the game after the Bears' defense finally got a few stops, but threw a ball straight to Packers defensive lineman B.J. Raji, who lumbered 18 yards into the end zone for a touchdown to give the Packers a 21-7 lead.

But Hanie wasn't finished. He threw a 35-yard touchdown pass to Earl Bennett to again cut the lead to seven points with 4:43 left.

The Bears forced a punt and got the ball back with under 3 minutes left. Hanie drove the Bears to the Green Bay 29-yard line, then threw a fourth-down interception to Sam Shields—the rookie's second of the game.

Now all those Pro Bowl voters who didn't think Rodgers was worthy can relax. They're off the hook. Rodgers will be headed to the Super Bowl instead.

Rodgers proved ready for the biggest day of his brief but impressive career as the successor to Brett Favre, even if his final stat line didn't look impressive after an ugly, hard-fought game.

He threw for 244 yards with two interceptions—a disappointment, given how well he had played lately. But his play in the first half was good enough to put the Bears in a two-touchdown hole, boggling a good defense that suddenly seemed to fall for every play-action fake.

Chicago was ready for a championship party under sunny skies and 20-degree temperatures, and went wild from the national anthem on. But Rodgers quieted them down quickly, marching the Packers on an opening drive then ended with Rodgers scrambling for a score.

The Bears went with a heavy dose of running back Matt Forte early on, with limited success.

Early in the second quarter, Brandon Jackson faked Brian Urlacher out for a long gain on a screen pass, and Rodgers' pass to Jordy Nelson set up James Starks' 4-yard touchdown run to give Green Bay a 14-0 lead.

It was the latest in a series of big moments for Rodgers, who has earned near-universal praise for the way he has played this season—especially since sitting out the Packers' Dec. 19 loss at New England because of a concussion.

Rodgers has been on a hot streak ever since, and doing it under pressure. The Packers would have been out of the playoffs with a loss in either of their last two regular-season games, including the regular season finale against Chicago.

Anthony leads Nuggets past Pacers, 121-107



DENVER (AP)—Carmelo Anthony gave the home crowd nothing to boo about Sunday night, scoring 36 points in the Denver Nuggets' 121-107 victory over the Indiana Pacers, who lost their fifth straight.

Anthony had been subjected to jeers by the home crowd as trade talk intensified last week, but on this night, the Denver fans showed him plenty of love, especially when he was rain-

ing 3s from all over the court as he put on a spectacular 23-point show in the third quarter.

Anthony's career-best six 3-pointers all came in the third period as the Nuggets turned a close game into a laughter—a reversal of their game in November when the Pacers made their first 20 shots of the third quarter and rolled to a 144-113 win in Indianapolis.

Anthony's previous high was five 3-pointers back in 2003, his rookie season.

Nene added 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Nuggets, who led by 25 and improved to 20-5 at the Pepsi Center, where they haven't lost consecutive games all season. Tyler Hansbrough had 27 points and 10 rebounds for Indiana, which trailed 59-51 at halftime.

After a chaotic week in which the New Jersey Nets scuttled talks on a proposed blockbuster trade for Anthony, the weekend was quiet in Denver with no new reports, rumors or

revelations in this Melo Drama that began last summer when the All-Star forward refused to sign a \$65 million extension through 2014-15.

Nuggets coach George Karl acknowledged over the weekend that the drama has weighed on his weary team.

"It's hard. I would say we all realize there's a little bit of heaviness to getting our jobs done. It doesn't mean we can't get it done," Karl said. "Actually, the performance has been pretty first class. The little things and the details of preparation and details of practice, I see a little heaviness to it."

Karl has dealt with the drama by keeping a sense of humor and harboring an amusing atmosphere when he can.

"I think most of the time, we've had some levity and some fun with it. When we've gotten hit in the head a couple of times, we seem like we've communicated through (it) and gotten into a better place," Karl said. "As I told Chauncey and a few of the guys today, 'This is going to be an important stretch. This is an important stretch to solidify to everybody that we're a playoff team and we're going to figure this out.'"

Jhonattan Vegas wins Hope Classic in playoff



LA QUINTA, Calif. (AP)—Jhonattan Vegas' path to the PGA Tour started in the remote reaches of Venezuela, where the toddler imitated his father's golf swing with sticks and stones while growing up in an oil-drilling camp.

Maybe that's why Vegas never gave up hope when he missed a 9-foot putt that could have won the Bob Hope Classic on the final regulation hole Sunday—or even when he put his playoff tee shot into the water moments later.

The 26-year-old rookie needed a wealth of patience and perseverance just to make it to Palm Springs from that camp in the Orinoco River valley.

And when Gary Woodland made a few mistakes of his own, the man they're already calling Jhonny Vegas hit the biggest jackpot of his pioneering career.

Vegas made a 13-foot par putt on the second playoff hole to win the Hope Classic, holding off Woodland for his first PGA Tour victory in just his fifth start.

Vegas is the first Venezuelan to win a PGA Tour event, but his remarkably steady performance over 92 holes in the five-day event suggests he's capable of winning again—and maybe even energizing an unpopular sport in his homeland.

"Just to think about winning on the PGA Tour, that's something," Vegas said. "But to make it happen is something else, and it's a crazy feeling. It was tough today to stay neutral and play golf, and that's why. To my country, I hope this means a lot. I really hope it means people changing (their minds) about the sport."

Vegas improbably became the first rookie to win the 52-year-old tourna-

ment with a spectacular up-and-down par after knocking his 92nd tee shot into the water 160 yards from the hole.

With the light fading rapidly behind the San Jacinto Mountains, Vegas got help from two poor shots by Woodland, who also was seeking his first tour win. Woodland's approach shot landed in a bunker, and his sand shot trickled to the opposite side of the green.

After his drop, Vegas confidently put a 9-iron right behind the pin. Woodland missed a par putt, and Vegas holed his \$900,000 putt.

"Seemed like we were out there forever," said Woodland, a former college basketball player from Kansas. "We were grinding all day. Jhonattan got off to a pretty good start, and I was just trying to catch him all day, so the playoff was no different. It was just sudden death, but who made the first mistake? And it looked like I did."

Vegas and Woodland eliminated defending champion Bill Haas with birdies on the first playoff hole after all three finished the final round at 27-under 333. Vegas is the third straight player to get his first PGA Tour victory at the Hope, joining Pat Perez and Haas.

Vegas and Woodland closed with 3-under 69s and Haas shot a 66.

Playing one group apart, Haas and Vegas both missed short putts on the final regulation hole. A few minutes after Haas botched a 6-footer for birdie, Vegas couldn't connect, making his only bogey of the final day. Woodland, who shared the lead with Vegas after each of the final three rounds, got into the playoff with a birdie on the final regulation hole.

Vegas cut a confident figure on the Palmer Private course, wearing a neon-peach shirt with starkly white pants and Nike hat. He was followed by his mother and his father, Carlos, who got his son into the game while



selling food and tending a nine-hole course in that oil camp.

Vegas left home at 17, moving to Houston to study golf and English before playing at the University of Texas.

"Life for me hasn't been always the best," Vegas said. "I had to fight to get where I am. I'm a fighter, and if I set a goal in front of me, I'm just going to die just to get there, and fight hard to accomplish what I set out in my mind."

Vegas' victory should give a boost to his desire to revive the sport in his native country, where golf has been under criticism from President Hugo Chavez, who has closed six courses in the past seven years. Vegas has expressed a desire to speak with Chavez, hoping to change the president's mind about the sport that Chavez has decried as a pastime of the rich.

"I hope they know about the story, and that it is possible to get to the PGA Tour and win," Vegas said of his fellow Venezuelans. "I hope people realize that all over the world."

The Masters will have a bit of Vegas flair this year—and not just from Jhonattan. His father wouldn't miss it for the world.

"I know it's a dream that my dad and my American friends have to go to the Masters, just to walk around," Vegas said with a broad smile. "That's what they told me. It's like, 'Before I die, just please get me to the Masters.'"

Ryan Palmer shot an 8-under 64 in the final round to finish fourth at 26 under, while Brian Gay's 10-under 62 shot him up from 37th place to a tie for fifth with Kevin Na (67) at 24 under.

Jhonattan Vegas of Venezuela, holds the trophy after his victory on the second playoff hole of Bob Hope Classic PGA golf tournament on the Palmer Private course at PGA West in La Quinta, Calif., Sunday, Jan. 23, 2011.

AP

Murray into quarters; No. 4 Soderling ousted

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Andy Murray moved into the Australian Open quarterfinals without dropping a set, beating No. 11 Jurgen Melzer 6-3, 6-1, 6-1 on Monday in an impressive victory that will heighten expectations about him breaking a long British drought.

Murray closed with an ace to eliminate Melzer in straight sets at Melbourne Park for the second year in a row.

The 2010 finalist gets a surprising opponent for his next match after 22-year-old Alexandr Dolgoplov stopped fourth-seeded Robin Soderling's eight-match winning streak with a 1-6, 6-3, 6-1, 4-6, 6-2 victory.

Murray has lost only 22 games on his way to the quarterfinals, the same stage where he beat Rafael Nadal here last year.

"Last year I played some of the best tennis of my life," said Murray, who made only 10 unforced errors against Melzer. "I'm hitting the ball really well, I hope it can continue."

"But I don't want to get carried away—I've never won one of these things before."

He has lost to Roger Federer in two major finals, extending a long title drought for British men at the Grand

Slam tournaments that dates to 1936.

Murray has only played Dolgoplov once, and is wary of his unorthodox game. The Ukrainian player recalled his only previous meeting with Murray, a loss in the Davis Cup, and was surprised at the pace of the ball.

"I remember I was expecting more," he said. "I thought he has a really big pace. I didn't play those kind of players in real life. I just saw it on TV. TV makes it look much faster."

Soderling hadn't dropped a set during his surge that started with his run to the title at the Brisbane tuneup event. He dominated the opening set but couldn't keep it up against Dolgoplov, who is making his fourth appearance in a major and was coming off a five-set win over former Australian Open finalist Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

Dolgoplov's cross-court backhand to bring up his first match point was typical of the 50 winners he hit against a stunned Soderling, the highest of the seeded players knocked out of the men's draw.

Soderling saved three match points, but his run came to an end with another unforced error, his 51st.

Dolgoplov earned nine breaks, in-

cluding three times after conceding a break himself in the fifth set. The 26-year-old Soderling had dropped his serve only twice this year.

"I'm trying to get his weak side and play uncomfortable for him—then if I have chances to make winners, that's my game," Dolgoplov said. "He has one of the hardest balls on tour but I was able to read his serve pretty well."

Soderling acknowledged Dolgoplov's talent, but the Swede said his own serve deserted him. His six aces were mixed with six double-faults.

"He's a great player. He has a really good backhand and he's moving well. He's defending very well. He's a great counter puncher," Soderling said. "But mostly I had tough times with myself."

Dolgoplov said his father worked as a coach for the likes of Andrei Medvedev, so he sometimes hit with the players when they were practicing.

"For sure I had some good times. I was a bit maybe annoying for some players to play with me," he said. "It was nice to start a tennis career like that."

No. 2-ranked Vera Zvonareva con-

tinued her roll toward a third consecutive Grand Slam final with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Iveta Benesova.

Zvonareva, who lost the Wimbledon final to Serena Williams and the U.S. Open final to Kim Clijsters last year, set up a quarterfinal match against No. 25 Petra Kvitova, who rallied to beat No. 22 Flavia Pennetta 3-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Zvonareva said she ignores the doubters who say she'll never win a major title.

"There are a lot of people that always underestimated me and ... and there are a lot of people that thought I never will make it to even like Grand Slam semifinals or something," she said. "But it doesn't really matter to me ... the most important thing is that I believe in myself."

Andy Roddick's 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 fourth-round loss to 19th-seeded Stanislas Wawrinka on Sunday night means there's no Americans in the men's or women's quarterfinals.

The eighth-seeded Roddick was the last American man standing. The women were out before the third round ended.

"Obviously wasn't the showing that we wanted, you know, but I'm doing what I can."

Roddick's ouster came on a day

when Federer equaled Jimmy Connors' Open era mark by reaching his 27th straight quarterfinal at a major, and Francesca Schiavone won the longest women's match in Grand Slam history—a 6-4, 1-6, 16-14 victory over Svetlana Kuznetsova that took 4 hours, 44 minutes.

No. 3 Novak Djokovic and No. 6 Tomas Berdych also won in the fourth round. Among the women, No. 1 Caroline Wozniacki and No. 9 Li Na advanced, while No. 14 Maria Sharapova lost to No. 30 Andrea Petkovic.

Wawrinka advanced to the first all-Swiss quarterfinal at a major in the Open era, where he'll run into defending champion Federer.

Federer beat Tommy Robredo 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-2 to reach the quarterfinals for the 27th major in a row.

Schiavone, the French Open champion, saved six match points, then converted on her third match point in the longest women's match at a major in terms of time in the Open era. The longest previous record was set in Australia last year when Barbora Zahlavova-Strycova beat Regina Kulikova 7-6 (5), 6-7 (10), 6-3 in 4:19.

The 30-year-old Italian will next meet Wozniacki, who reached the quarterfinals in Australia for the first time with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Anastasiya Sevastova.



australian open

2010 NMIFA Women’s Futsal Fall League Finals



Paire’s Amber Roberts kicks the ball out of the box while MP United’s Natalie Hill closes in.



NMIFA general secretary Ed Salas, standing right, poses with members of Paire Football Club A and B league teams, which ruled the 2010 NMIFA Women’s Futsal Fall League last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



Paire’s Megan Herber looks at MP United’s defense first before dribbling the ball.



MP United goalie Melody Matson, center, reaches in for a deflection, while Paire’s Zoe Jewell attempts for a header.



Paire’s Patty Coleman, right, stops the ball against MP United’s Tomoko Kawakata during the first half of the A league title game. Paire won, 8-1.

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Paire goalie Marie Ornes gets one of her several saves in the second half.



Paire’s Vanessa Mobel, right, goes for a header against Matansa U18’s Rima Halaby during their B league title match.



Matansa U18’s Reylynn Sapong, right, and Paire’s Lori Serna collide as they battle for the ball.



Phalai Frink, right, gets a hi-five from teammate Michiko Tenorio after scoring Matansa U18’s first goal in the match.



Jets silenced:
Steelers win
AFC title, 24-19

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune Sports

Jhonattan Vegas
wins Hope Classic
in playoff

PAGE 25



28 TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2011

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Season's best bowlers recognized



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Bowling Association concluded the 2010 season with an awards ceremony at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe Sunday night to honor the top performers of the year.



Leading the awardees were 2010 Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Robert Talavera and Gloria Omechelang and 2010 Fiji Water Prince of the Lanes Marion McKenzie.

Talavera received a championship trophy from SBA president Jerry Tan during the awards presentation. He also took home \$750. Runner-up Rusty Musca and third placer Simon Manacop also got trophies and \$350 and \$200, respectively.

In the women's division, besides the trophies, Omechelang pocketed \$325 and

See SEASON'S on Page 26

The Top 3 finishers in the 2010 Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes and Fiji Water Prince of the Lanes tournaments pose with their trophies during the awards ceremony at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kagman remains unscathed

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



No contest.

Kagman High School was too much for Mt. Carmel School, as the Ayuyus crushed the Knights during their varsity game, 85-47, in the 2010-2011 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium yesterday.

The win was fourth in as many games for Kagman, while Mt. Carmel has yet to win a single match after four assignments. It was the Ayuyus' second victory over the Knights, as the defending champions also demolished Mt. Carmel in the first round of the regular season on Jan. 10, 79-56.

See KAGMAN on Page 26

Kagman High School's Juan Maratita eludes Mt. Carmel School defenders, as he goes up for a left handed layup during their game in the MISO varsity caging yesterday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Two in a row for Proa, Ol'Aces

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



The Ol'Aces and NMC Proa recorded contrasting wins in the 2nd Docomo Pacific/UBA Men's League last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium to remain unbeaten in two games.

NMC Proa clobbered Rollers, 82-59, in the curtain raiser, while the Ol'Aces outclassed

See TWO on Page 26

The Ol'Aces' Clayton Kenty, left, pulls up for a jumper against Mobil's Marvin Rabaulman during their game in the UBA/Docomo caging last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



White

Ultimatum for Pacific Games participants

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI sports federations interested in participating in the 14th Pacific Games in New Caledonia have until next month to make their final decision.



Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association president Michael White announced the deadline for the submission of entries by numbers in a letter sent to NMASA members yesterday.

"The deadline for entry by
See ULTIMATUM on Page 26